

1330. d. 6

THE  
L I F E  
O F  
L O R D B A C O N.









*BACON* Lord *VERULAM.*

THE  
L I F E  
O F  
FRANCIS BACON,  
Lord Chancellor of England.

BY  
DAVID MALLEY, Esq;

L O N D O N :  

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M D C C L X V I I I .



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TO  
The RIGHT HONORABLE,  
THE  
Earl of CHESTERFIELD.

MY LORD,

THE first and most valuable quality of an Historian is a scrupulous attachment to truth. Without this, all other qualities deserve little consideration; or rather are highly blameable: they serve only to mislead the reader, whom they pretend to inform and direct. As I have endeavoured, in the following sheets, to guide myself by this principle; the dedication of *such a work*, however otherwise inconsiderable, ought to be clear not only from the guilt, but from the imputation, of flattery.

YOUR very enemies, my Lord, will acquit me of both, for inscrib-



iv DEDICATION.

ing it to you, as to the *Judge* and *Patron* of genius and wit: as to One besides, who has long exerted, in the true interest and for the honor of his Country, those abilities which History most delights to celebrate.

THAT you may yet live, my Lord, many and happy years to serve that Country, you so eminently adorn; is, I am persuaded, the united wish of all those, upon whose favourable opinion a great and good man would value himself. For me, I beg leave to say, in this public manner, that I am truly, with that *kind* of regard which neither fortune nor birth alone can inspire,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's  
most devoted Servant,  
D. MALLET.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Life of Lord BACON has been twice translated into French: and both times, perhaps, in such a manner as could convey, to those who were able to read it in that language only, no very just idea of the original. Besides departing almost entirely from the turn of his expression, the translators mistook, in many places, the author's sense and meaning. This last error, however ought to be forgiven them, the more readily, as our translations out of their tongue are liable, almost universally, to the same censure, and that too in a greater degree. Therefor,

*Hanc veniam petimus, damusque vicissim.*

But in my case, the thing has gone farther. The first translator, by his art of political chymistry, extracted out of plain and literal history a libel on Sir Robert Walpole's administration. The last has made me say, in matters of opinion, what I never thought; and commit blunders, in matters of fact, which the most moderate acquaint-

ance with history must have preserved both him and me from falling into. And yet upon such a translation as this, have the journalists of Trevoux formed their judgment; it may be a little too hastily, not only of the author's talents, but of his morals. As this is really the case, how must that learned society be surprized to find, that the licentiousness they complain of had it's rise in their own country, not in Britain? and that the French catholic, not the English heretic, is entirely accountable for it?

If the author of this life has remarked, with some freedom, on the dissolute lives of the clergy, during the darker ages, that memorable æra of Christian ignorance and Christian depravity; he has done no more than what some very respectable writers of the Roman communion had done before him: and what the best men of their church and ours, even now, acknowledge and deplore. The reverend journalists have seen the life of Bacon through the medium of a translation, which has not only obscured, but altered the features of its original:

and those parts, which to them appeared most exceptionable, were certainly aggravated, if not wholly changed, by the hand that copied them. Of this they will find more than one instance in the letter immediately following; which is there for published for their truer information. What is said in it of the life, or it's author, is entirely submitted to the judgment of the public; without any thing even insinuated on his part to prejudice them in favour of the very ingenious writer, to whom they are obliged for it. I beg leave only to say, that I subscribe heartily to the sentiments which will be found towards the end of this letter. They are the sentiments of a man who loves, because he understands, the true interests of humanity. And I shall never be afraid to own, that whatever notions have a tendency to destroy those, whether in British or foreign writings, whether in peace or war, are the objects of my sincerest detestation. War, in its own nature, is the great scourge of human kind, and the great reproach of human reason: and, from the beginning of time, none was ever made that could be



fully justified in all its circumstances. Is it not then a disgrace to our common humanity, while our respective nations are plunged into the inevitable calamities that are ever attendant upon war, to inflame and exasperate those calamities, by the petulance of wit, and the bitterness of abuse? But I believe all men of sense, who are at the same time men of virtue, will agree, that they are by no means the best writers, or the best subjects, of either nation, who are the most guilty of this enormity. Opprobrious names and insolent railing are no more the marks of real genius, than oaths and blustering are of true courage. On the contrary, it were to be wished that all our authors, and all our commanders too, had copied after the example of the duke of Randalan at Hanover, and the late duke of Marlborough at St. Malo. A good writer may defend the cause of his country, nay, he must defend it better, without having recourse to the despicable aid of odious appellations, and violent sarcasms: as an able general may honestly obey his sovereign's orders, without reducing to absolute



misery the unhappy people, whom he had before insulted with all the wantonness of contempt. A captain of banditti could do no more: Mandarin did much less. The English nobleman, I have mentioned, and whose untimely death has put half our nobility into mourning, will be no less lamented by the better few in France, for his humane and generous behaviour there, than the count de Gisors was in England, for the amiable qualities by which he was distinguished among us. The following verses on his death were produced here: and let it be remembered, that the two nations were then at war. This, had they no other merit, would make them worthy of being preserved, longer than any thing of mine can deserve to live.

Cultiver tous les artes, protéger le génie,  
 Joindre au gont le savoir & les graces aux moeurs,  
 Combattre pour son Roi, mourir pour sa patrie,  
 Regretté des vaincus, admiré des vainqueurs,  
 Telle fut de Gisors & l'étude & la gloire :

Par leurs accens plaintifs les Nymphes de la Loire  
 D'une épouse & d'un pere expriment les douleurs;  
 Sur l'urne du Héros leurs mains jettent des fleurs:  
 Ma muse plus timide honore sa mémoire

Moins par ses vers que par ses pleurs.

**V**OUS me félicitez, mon cher ami, d'avoir renoncé au pénible emploi d'abrégé les ouvrages d'autrui. Quoi ! tous les deux mois un volume ? Je vous entens, & dans ce que vous me dites je démêle ce que votre politesse me cache. Les ouvrages périodiques avancent aussi peu la réputation que la fortune. Vous connoissez ces mouches éphémères, insectes d'une saison, dont les essaims nombreux, éclos au point du jour, s'élevant de quatre piés, obscurcissent l'air, s'y débattent, & tombent pour ne plus revivre dans le marais où ils sont nés ; & vous dites, ces insectes ces mouches n'ont ni le vol plus étendu, ne la vie plus durable, que les innombrables critiques de chaque premier jour du mois.

*Efimeri del campo*

*Germogliano il mattin, cagion la sera.*

Cette idée méprisable des journaux n'est point la mienne. J'en ai composé, j'en ai lu. J'en connois la difficulté, j'en admire l'usage. Les moins travaillés ont le leur. Eh ! que deviendroient sans eux nos desœuvrés, qui douze fois par an y puisent la quantité de connoissance qui leur convient, & font circuler dans les cercles ce qu'ils ont retenu des magasins & des mercures ?

Mais quand cette partie du public, qui attend les journaux pour juger des livres, seroit plus respectable qu'elle ne l'est, je vous pardonnerois de ne pas vous y joindre. Vous vous plaignez de mes confrères. Je les excuse & ne vous blâme pas. Le mâle historien de Bacon a droit d'appeller à son siècle & à la postérité des censures de Trevoux \*, & des jugemens de Liege †.

Il y a cependant, Monsieur, quelqu'un qui vous a plus maltraité. C'est celui qui a donné au public la *Vie du Chancelier Bacon traduite de l'Anglois*. Ce livre imprimé in 8 à Amsterdam (ou plutôt à

\* Mem. de Trevoux, Janv. 1756.

† Journ. Encyclop. Janv. 1756.

Paris) 1755, est l'ouvrage, que les Journalistes François ont analysé. Pouvoient ils deviner que cette histoire n'est point la vôtre, & que semblable à l'Hippolite trainé par des chevaux, elle n'offre à ceux qui la comparent avec l'histoire Angloise,

*Qu'un objet, où des Dieux éclate la colère,  
Et que méconnoitroit l'oeil même de son père ?*

Ce seroit être trop sévère que de défendre à un journaliste de juger d'un ouvrage, dont il n'a pas l'original sous les yeux. Il y a des traductions dont un coup d'oeil garantit la fidélité. Il se trouve des génies, qui dans ce qu'on fait dire à un auteur démêlent ce qu'il a du dire. Mais tout le monde n'a pas cette pénétration ; & le plus sûr est de ne pas se presser à mettre sur le compte de l'original les fautes qu'on trouve dans la copie. Entre l'auteur & le traducteur le préjugé doit être en faveur du premier. Et si ce traducteur est anonyme, si son travail paroît précipité, si son ouvrage renferme des erreurs de fait & des fautes d'écolier, — alors sans doute



cette règle a une double force, & le journaliste qui y manque ne saisit qu'un nuage en croyant embrasser Junon.

*Le style en général*, disent les journalistes de Liege, est négligé : je le crois comme eux, pourvu qu'ils ne parlent que de l'histoire Française. *L'auteur & le traducteur ne se réveillent que lors qu'il faut frapper quelque portrait intéressant.* FRAPER UN PORTRAIT ! l'expression est neuve ; je la passe cependant aussi bien que l'injustice de mettre sur votre compte le sommeil de leur compatriote. Mais non ; suivant les auteurs de Trevoux, tant s'en faut que ce traducteur s'endorme — *dans son style*, disent-ils, *il est libre & aisé, fier & ferme : en traduisant sa plume ne paroit souffrir ni gênes ni entraves ; & loin d'avoir comme les traducteurs la modestie d'un subalterne qui administre des biens étrangers, il a toute l'indépendance d'un maître, qui dispose comme il lui plaît de ses propres richesses.* Ceci est-il un éloge ou une ironie ? En lisant le journal de Trevoux on démêle difficilement l'un de l'autre. Mais lequel

des deux que ce soit, j'ose assurer que si c'est un mérite à un traducteur d'être indépendant, jamais personne n'y eut plus de droit que le vôtre.

En faut-il des preuves ? Je les trouve à la lettre à chaque page. Bornons-nous aux plus marquées. Je pardonnerois à un traducteur, qui, écrivant en terre papale, supprimeroit la période suivante. *L'esprit exécrationnable de la superstition, à laquelle cette Reine (Marie) s'étoit livrée, se montra sans déguisement. Des prêtres, des inquisiteurs inhumains lui prêterent leur affreux ministère. On trahit, on tourmenta, on fit misérablement périr quiconque refusa de professer ce qu'il lui étoit impossible de croire.* Mais pour quoi substituer à ces expressions qu'autorise votre climat celles-ci, qui ne sont d'aucun pays, & ne décèlent la connoissance d'aucune histoire ? *Marie avoit abjuré la religion de son pere en Angleterre, & par ce changement elle porta la division & le trouble dans son royaume : on emprisonnoit, on dépouilloit de leurs biens, on faisoit mourir tous ceux qui refusoient de professer une foi, qui n'étoit point la leur ni celle de leurs peres.* Comment Messieurs

de Trevoux si clairvoyans, lorsqu'il s'agit de trouver dans les ouvrages d'autrui *de quoi blâmer*, ont-ils manqué cet endroit ? Qui ne fait qu'à la réserve de l'autorité du pape & la sainteté des moines, HENRI VIII. croyoit les mêmes choses que sa fille ? & que si la foi à laquelle on vouloit ramener les protestans n'étoit & ne pouvoit être la leur, elle avoit été du moins celle de leurs peres ?

Vous aviez sagement dit que l'oeconomie seule d'Elisabeth la mit en état d'acquitter une dette de quatre millions, dont la nation se trouvoit chargée, mais vous n'aviez garde de penser & moins encore d'écrire qu'elle opéra ce prodige *sans impôts & sans subsides*. En parlant du seul bienfait que Bacon obtint de son allié le grand Burghley, le traducteur oublie que ce fut une simple survivance, & non la possession actuelle d'une charge, qui ne devint vacante que vingt ans après. *Coke* disiez-vous, *étoit le plus grand Jurisconsulte de son tems, mais ne pouvoit être autre chose*. *Coke*, dit le traducteur avec aussi peu de politesse que de

vérité, très ignorant d'ailleurs ne savoit que la loi.  
 Le prince Henri, qui avoit toutes les bonnes qualités  
 qui manquoient au Roi son frère, &c. Le prince  
 Henri frère du Roi Jaques ! cette faute est trop  
 grossière pour ne pas être mise sur le compte de  
 l'imprimeur. Que ne puis je y mettre aussi la  
 confusion des deux Theodores ? l'inventeur de la  
 poudre à canon placé dans le dernier siècle ? la  
 descente des Normans & leur conquête mises au  
 IX. avant les succès d'Alfred ? & le mot célèbre  
 du vainqueur de Rome, qu'il étoit plus glorieux  
 d'étendre les bornes de l'esprit humain que de recu-  
 lter celles d'un empire, attribué à Cicéron & ap-  
 pliqué à César ?

Après des méprises si fortes, il ne faut plus  
 s'étonner que le François qui a traduit votre livre,  
 confondant deux mots Anglois, dont le son & le  
 sens diffèrent autant que l'orthographe \*, trans-  
 forme le *juge des plaidoyés communs*, ou des dif-  
 ferens de particulier à particulier, en *juge des*  
*jeux communs* ; qu'il ignore que les mots de

\* Pleas a été pris pour Plays, & ailleurs je trouve qu'on  
 à lu *hint* pour *hit*.



*Queen's council* désignent les avocats de la cour, & non les *conseillers du conseil de la Reine* ; qu'il rende enfin *sagesse* par jugement, *renommée* par invention, *badinage* par esprit, & *sermon* par lecture.

En écartant ces fautes où vous n'entrez pour rien, j'ai relevé la plus grande partie des critiques qu'on vous a faites. On vous blâme d'avoir mêlé & comme pénétré ensemble l'histoire de Bacon & celle d'Angleterre. Vos épisodes fatiguent, vos digressions font perdre de vue le héros. Ce jugement m'étonne. Votre Héros seroit-il un S. François ou un S. Ignace, personnages fameux, qui tirent d'eux seuls toute leur gloire, & dont l'histoire ne tient en rien à celle de leur tems ? Il ne leur faut d'accompagnement ; leurs bustes sont faits pour leurs niches. Mais le portrait d'un homme d'état n'exige-t-il pas qu'on dépeigne la nation dont il fut ministre, & les princes qui l'employèrent ? Parlera-t-on d'un avocat, sans rien dire de ses concurrens, de ses plaidoyés, de ses succès ? Rendra-t-on justice enfin à un homme qui reforma la philosophie, si



Pon ne donne une idée de ce que la philosophie étoit avant lui, & de ce qu'elle feroit peut-être encore s'il n'avoit pas vécu ? Soutenir de tels paradoxes, Monsieur, souhaiter une vie de Bacon, où il ne soit question ni d'Elisabeth ni de Jaques, où Essex, Coke, Overbury, Somerset, Buckingham demeurent derrière le rideau, où enfin l'on ne fasse connoître ni la philosophie des scholastiques ni la théologie des moines, c'est vouloir une vie de Cicéron, où Verres, Catilina, Hortensius, César, Rome enfin & l'Académie ne trouveront aucune place.

Vos censeurs, Monsieur, ont si je ne me trompe regardé votre ouvrage comme une pièce isolée. Les deux dernières éditions en quatre volumes *in folio* des oeuvres de Bacon ne leur sont point parvenues. S'ils les avoient vues, auroient ils méconnu la destination d'une vie, qui sert en quelque sorte d'introduction & de clé aux lettres & aux discours de ce grand homme. Les particularités qu'elle contient sont du moins plus nécessaires pour l'intelligence de ces pièces, que ne

le feroient les évanouiffemens de Bacon dans les éclipses de lune, & le certificat de mort fourni par son chapelain, qu'on vous blâme d'avoir omis. Quand les Plutarques se tireront d'un monastère, l'histoire d'un grand homme deviendra le panégyrique d'un saint. Les rapports des choses y feront place aux liaisons des anecdotes, & aux transitions des sentences. Nous n'y trouverons point ces grands tableaux des mœurs, des connoissances, de la politique d'un siècle; mais l'on ne négligera point de nous apprendre que le héros assistoit à la messe, qu'il savoit son *credo*, & qu'il a reçu l'extrême onction.

Mais, Monsieur, votre tombeau ne sera point en terre sainte. Messieurs de Trevoux vous accusent d'outrer la *liberté de penser* & la *licence Anglicane*. Avec de tels sentimens si l'on va en paradis, ce n'est point sans passer par le purgatoire. " Pour montrer, disent les gardiens du dépôt de  
 " la foi, jusqu'où l'historien pousse sa témérité,  
 " il suffit de citer une seule de ses propositions;  
 " Dieu, dit-il, semble avoir laissé (*la Religion*) au  
 " au choix de l'homme. J'ai cherché en vain dans

votre livre cette sentence peu catholique. Voici  
 tout ce que j'y ai trouvé page. 15 & 16. " Les  
 " révolutions dans la religion, plus encore que  
 " les alterations dans tout le gouvernement, sont  
 " propres à exciter dans tout le corps de la société  
 " de violentes agitations ; parce que chaque par-  
 " ticulier est alors immédiatement & intimement  
 " animé de ce qui lui paroît l'intérêt le plus grand  
 " & le plus durable \*." Rapprochez, je vous prie,  
 ces paroles, de celles-ci que le traducteur y a sub-  
 stituées pag. 21 & 22, & sur les quelles la cen-  
 sure des journalistes est fondée. *Les changemens  
 en cette matière (de religion) sont plus propres que  
 tous les autres à exciter des troubles par la fermenta-  
 tion qu'ils font naître dans les esprits, qui souf-  
 frent impatiemment de se voir contraints & gênés  
 sur une chose, que Dieu semble avoir laissée au choix  
 de l'homme. Cette licence gallicane surprendra sans  
 doute Messrs de Trevoux. De quelque préjugé  
 national qu'ils puissent être animés, je doute que  
 s'ils lisent cette lettre ils ne conviennent que les*

\* *Revolutions in religion are apt to put the whole constitution  
 of a society into a ferment, even more strongly than alterations in  
 government ; as every individual is immediately and intimately  
 affected by what seems to him of highest and most lasting concern.*

*principes d'indépendance* ne sont pas un simple fruit de terroir ; qu'une *plume françoise* peut *enchérir* sur la licence de notre Isle ; & qu'en un mot les *bons François* & les *vrais Chrétiens* ne sont pas tout-à-fait synonymes.

S'il suffisoit de se montrer l'un pour être l'autre, personne à coup sur n'approcheroit des vénérables pères, qui vous ont traité comme depuis la guerre ils traitent vos compatriotes. Leurs mémoires, dans leur destination consacrés uniquement aux sciences & aux arts, le sont depuis nos malheureuses divisions aux traites que lancent contre nous mille petits écrivains, dont le zèle aveugle est l'unique mérite ; & qui de leur souffle impur enveniment des playes déjà trop sanglantes, & dont un homme de bien tenteroit la guérison ou détourneroit les regards. Messieurs de Trevoux recueillent dans leurs volumes ces fruits venimeux du ressentiment & de la haine : ils les consacrent, que dis je ? ils en augment & l'acreté & le poison †.

† La comparaison des Anglois au vautour, que l'aigle vic-



Pout juger si ce reproche est fondé, je vous invite à lire les extraits, que nos journalistes ont

torieux de la France tient dans ses serres vengeresses, & se prépare à mettre en pièces; les accusations d'ambition, de machiavelisme, de piraterie, qui reviennent chaque mois; le conseil insultant donné à leurs ennemis de mettre leur modestie de niveau avec leurs succès, telles sont quelques unes des fleurs du Journal de Trevoux. Voulez vous juger de leur suite, lisez la tirade suivante. C'est une des plus modérées. " Le

" sage, dit Grotius \*, ne fait la guerre que pour avoir la paix;  
 " telle est depuis longtems la maxime du gouvernement Fran-  
 " çois; il a même ajouté, dans la conjoncture présente, à  
 " l'esprit de cette maxime; il a imité l'exemple de Scipion,  
 " qui aima mieux dissimuler les intrigues de Carthage, que  
 " de rompre d'abord avec cette entreprenante République.  
 " Mais enfin le moment de la vengeance arrive: ceux  
 " qui s'obstinent à vouloir le mal, dit Seneque †, méritent  
 " qu'on leur en fasse porter la peine. Quels doivent être  
 " aujourd'hui (en 1757) les sentimens de cette fameuse  
 " Albion, qui a voulu la guerre sous les plus légers pré-  
 " textes; qui l'a commencée par des pirateries, qui l'a sou-  
 " tenue avec plus d'animosité que de succès; qui n'a bien  
 " connu ni ce qu'elle devoit défendre ni ce qu'elle pouvoit  
 " attaquer, ni les ennemis qu'elle se faisoit en Europe, ni  
 " les alliés qu'il lui convenoit d'acquérir en Amérique: pro-  
 " cédés singuliers dans toute cette guerre, où l'on recon-  
 " noit, du côté des agresseurs, le desir de nuire desitué de  
 " conseil, & l'ambition d'envahir sans l'art de conquérir  
 " avec gloire."

\* *Grot. de Jure Belli & Pacis, lib. iii. cap. 25.*

† *Senéc. lib. i. de Ira, cap. 15, & 16.*



donnés des *Mémoires* publiés en France sur les prétentions des deux peuples ; du livre infidèle intitulé, *Précis des faits* ; du *Parallèle* odieux & si sujet à retortion des *Cartaginois* & des *Anglois* ; du *Roman politique* ; de l'*Observateur* dirai-je ou du bonteseu prétendu *Hollandais*, & de je ne sais quels poèmes, dont je ne citerai que ce seul vers,

*Ta patrie a l'orgueil & la foi de Cartage.*

Jamais je n'ai si bien senti la vérité de ce mot que la haine est aveugle, qu'en parcourant dans le *Journal de Trévoux* les trois lettres d'un officier *Irlandois*, qui s'efforce à prouver, que depuis le départ de ceux qui comme lui ont préféré à leur patrie une cause proscrite, les Anglois sont entièrement privés & de courage & de vertu.

Les auteurs du *Journal des Savans* ont pris part dans la querèle nationale. Ils ont exposé avec fidélité & avec feu les raisons & les plaintes de leurs compatriotes. Mais quelle délicatesse

dans leur choix ! quelle politesse dans leur stile !  
 quelle décence dans leurs tableaux ! quelle modé-  
 ration dans leurs traits ! D'où vient cette diffé-  
 rence entr'eux & les journalistes de Trevoux ?  
 Les uns sont-ils plus citoyens & les autres plus  
 philosophes ? Ceux-là connoissent ils l'esprit &  
 ceux-ci portent-ils simplement le nom du maître  
 & du grand docteur de la paix ?

Il est vrai qu'au défaut de Jésus, Sénèque est  
 l'oracle des derniers. Sur le papier comme sur  
 la mer, dira le P. B . . . . vos gens furent les  
 agresseurs. Permettez-nous de justes reprefailles.  
 Les François sont-ils moins maltraités dans vos  
 brochures & dans le *London Evening Post* que les  
 Anglois ne le sont dans nos feuilles & dans la *Ga-  
 zette d'Amsterdam* ? Non, mon révérend Pere,  
 & j'en gémis avec tous ceux qui sentent en grand  
 & sentent en hommes. Mais nos petits écrivains  
 de pamphlets ont-ils un nom ? Vous sied-il de  
 vous confondre avec eux ? d'en emprunter ces  
 portraits hideux qu'ils tracent de leur propre na-  
 tion ? de faire par choix ce qu'ils font par néces-

fité? Y a-t-il enfin parmi nous, je ne dis pas une Société comparable à la vôtre, mais un seul auteur de réputation, qui vous ait donné ce dangereux exemple, ou qui ne rougit de l'imiter?

J'ai peu de gont pour les disputes de politique: je ne suis pas tenté de soutenir sans mission les droits & les démarches de ceux qui nous gouvernent, & moins encore de rejeter sur nos ennemis les injustices qu'ils nous reprochent. Je fais que les particuliers sont rarement bien instruits des ressorts qui déterminent les princes, & qu'ils ne doivent point l'être. Attaché fortement à un Etat, dont un choix réfléchi m'a rendu citoyen, je partage avec zèle ses bons & ses mauvais succès: si des mains aussi foibles que les miennes pouvoient jamais être utiles, elles seroient employées à son service, & il n'y point de sacrifice que je ne fusse prêt de lui faire, à la réserve de celui de l'humanité. Dans ces sentimens, mon cher ami, je me réjouis de nos avantages, sans insulter aux pertes de nos ennemis; & la victoire la plus glo-

rieuse perdrait pour moi tout son prix, si je ne la regardois comme un acheminement à la paix.

Je fais combien cet équilibre est difficile, & je ne me flatte pas de n'en jamais sortir. Que l'animosité est naturelle contre ceux, dirai je qui nous font & dont on craint du mal, ou à qui l'on en fait soi même! Le coeur décide, nos intérêts forment nos goûts, & l'amour de la patrie est & doit être une passion.

Il y a entre les diverses nations des modes pour la haine comme il y en a pour l'amour. Le philosophe entraîné par le torrent se met insensiblement à l'étiquette. Les gens de lettres à Paris donnoient, disoit-on, dans l'Anglomanie avant la guerre. Je crains que depuis ils ne soient devenus Anglomises au Anglophobes.

Distinguer ce qu'on doit au titre de citoyen de ce qu'exige celui d'homme, c'est une discussion délicate digne de la plume d'un Montesquieu. Elle exige des connoissances, une tranquillité d'e-

Esprit & un loisir dont je ne jouis point. Permettez-moi cependant de hasarder un petit nombre d'idées, qui, au défaut de liaisons & de développement, auront le mérite dont vous faites le plus de cas, celui d'être & les fruits & les signes du sentiment.

1. On n'est point obligé de croire quelque gouvernement que ce soit ou entièrement infaillible ou tout-à-fait inexcusable. Toutes les injures sont rarement d'un seul côté. Rome n'étoit pas plus vertueuse que Carthage, & Pompée eut autant de torts que César. C'est témérité que d'imputer à la mauvaise foi ce qui peut avoir été l'effet des circonstances ou du préjugé. C'est injustice que de changer en principe dominant une erreur accidentelle. C'est le plus grand des crimes que de rendre toute une nation responsable des fautes ou des mauvais procédés de ses chefs.

2. La société des gens de lettres dispersée dans les diverses nations ne doit jamais se desunir. Moins encore lui sied-il de transférer dans les



sciences les opérations de la guerre. La conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normans, devoit-elle fournir dans des circonstances critiques un sujet de prix à une académie ? J'ouvre certains recueils, & j'y vois les périodes de nos malheureuses ruptures marqués par des excursions sur la littérature, la philosophie, la religion des peuples, qu'en d'autres tems peut-être on avoit trop loués. Quoi parce que les François & les Anglois se disputent l'Ohio, Newton n'est il qu'un faiseur d'hypothèses, & Fontenelle qu'un écrivain sans gout † ?

3. La lassitude ou l'épuisement des partis, un combat de générosité, un intérêt de ministère,

† Des philosophes peuvent-ils pousser aussi loin, m'allez vous dire, l'animosité nationale ? Lisez, Monsieur. " La célèbre Albion ne'est pas le seul pays où l'on *pense*, comme quelques fades adulateurs l'ont écrit parmi nous. Cette guerre est en général une bonne occasion qui pût se présenter de nous déprendre des idées Angloises ; de leur littérature, de leurs modes, de leur faux amour de la liberté, de leurs principes outrés en tout genre, etc. Que d'admiration perdue, quand on voit tout cela de près ! " J'espère que ceux qui ont jugé la guerre une *bonne occasion* pour une réflexion de ce genre, n'attendront pas pour en rougir, le retour de la paix.

que fais-je ? moins que tout cela peut-être va terminer la guerre. Elles finissent toutes, comme elles commencent, par des riens. La paix revient, la confiance renaît, l'humanité reprend ses droits. Au lieu d'accoutumer l'esprit des peuples à la haine, tâchons de leur inspirer, sinon de l'amour, du moins du respect pour leurs ennemis. Ne répétons plus ni de part ni d'autre les odieuses dénominations de perfides ou de lâches. Que nos discours, que surtout nos écrits expriment nos regrets d'être ennemis de peuples, que mille vertus nous engagent d'aimer.

Jadis près des bords de l'Euphrate vivoit un philosophe père de plusieurs fils. Nés avec des qualités différentes & des passions fortes, rarement ils passaient leurs journées sans disputes. Souvent ils en venoient aux coups ; dernière raison des enfans comme des Rois. Mais leurs combats étoient légers, ils se relevoient à la première chute, s'embrassoient, se demandoient mutuellement pardon, & d'ordinaire le vainqueur faisoit les frais du raccommodement. Mes enfans, leur avit dit leur père, il vaudroit

mieux céder vos droits que de les disputer par la force. Mais vous êtes trop jeunes pour sentir la sagesse de ce conseil. Battez vous donc, lorsque vous ne pourrez vous entendre ; mais je défens les injures, & je veux qu'après vos combats celui qui se trouvera supérieur se relâche en faveur d'un frère déjà suffisamment humilié. Peuples de l'Europe, ces enfans ce sont vous, leurs jouets sont les vôtres ; ne soyez ni plus ardens qu'eux dans vos querèles, ni plus enflés dans vos succès, ni plus fixes dans vos sentimens, & puisqu'après vos combats il faudra vous raccommoder, ne vous faites point d'insultes, dont le souvenir subsisteroit, sans doute malgré vous, après la paix. La perte d'une ville peut être oubliée : un bon mot ou une injure ne se pardonne jamais.

4. L'Abbé de S. Pierre, auteur respecté de projets bienfaisans, qu'on n'a traités de rêves que parcequ'ils supposent le genre humain plus agé de quelques siècles qu'il ne l'est, est mort persuadé

qu'une paix perpétuelle en Europe étoit moins impraticable & moins éloignée que la pierre philosophale, ou le mouvement perpétuel †. Peut-être en effet nos neveux verront-ils ce prodige, sans en être étonnés ; mais si je ne me trompe ce n'est point, comme l'Abbé l'a cru, d'une diète de Rois qu'il faut l'attendre. Si la raison humaine se perfectione, il faut convenir que les princes & leurs ministres sont les enfans plus tardifs. C'est chez les peuples que la réformation doit commencer, & c'est aux sages à instruire les peuples. Que la liberté qui élève l'ame, que la police qui addoucit les mœurs, que le commerce & l'industrie qui égalisent les climats, que la philosophie enfin, qui transforme l'univers en une seule famille d'Etres nécessaires les uns aux autres, s'étendent & se généralisent ; alors commencera cette année merveilleuse, après laquelle soupirent les sages, & que Platon, Locke, Fénelon, & Montesquieu ont travaillé à rapprocher.

† Lisez son ouvrage posthume intitulé *Annales politiques*, où vous qui donnez encore à Louis XIV. le nom de *Grand*.

C'est sur leurs immortels ouvrages, mon cher ami, qu'il convient à tout auteur de former ses écrits, s'il veut se rendre utile à son siècle & cher à la postérité. Votre poëme d'Amintor & de Theodore est un engagement envers le public de poursuivre la même route. Vous y peignites les funestes effets du fanatisme religieux. Où ceux de l'enthousiasme politique feroient-ils plus d'impression que dans la vie d'un héros ? L'histoire du Duc de Marlborough, à laquelle vous travaillez, fons les yeux du juge le plus éclairé, le plus délicat, & le plus philanthrope de l'Angleterre, remplie de faits ignorés & de vérités instructives, écrite avec la noblesse & le feu qui animent un historien jaloux du titre de précepteur de l'humanité, est attendue avec impatience de l'Europe entière ; & je fais que c'est à l'Europe entière que vous la destinez. Cette considération, qui sans doute vous engage à en différer la publication jusqu' à la paix, seroit pour moi une raison de



plus d'en souhaiter, & s'il se pouvoit, d'en hâter  
le retour par mes vœux.

Je suis, avec un attachement sincère,

Monsieur,

Votre très humble

& très obeissant Serviteur,

Du Musée Britannique.

M. r. de Brém. 1758.

M. M A T Y.

**T H E**  
**L I F E**  
**O F**  
**FRANCIS BACON,**  
**LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR**  
**OF ENGLAND.**

**T**HE antient Egyptians had a law, which ordained, that the actions and characters of their Dead should be solemnly convafsed before certain Judges ; in order to regulate what was due to their memory. No quality, however exalted, no abilities, however eminent, could exempt the poffeffors from this laft and impartial trial. To ingenuous minds this was a powerful incentive, in the purfuit of virtue ; and a ftrong reftRAINT on the moft abandoned, in their career of vice. Whoever undertakes to write the life of any perfon, deferving to be remembered by pofterity, ought to look upon this law as prefcribed to him. He is fairly to record the faults as well as the good qualities, the failings as well

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as the perfections, of the Dead ; with this great view, to warn and improve the Living. For this reason, though I shall dwell with pleasure on the shining part of my Lord Bacon's character, as a writer ; I shall not dare either to conceal or palliate his blemishes, as a man. It equally concerns the public to be made acquainted with both.

SIR Nicholas Bacon was the first Lord Keeper of the Seals, invested with all the dignity, and trusted with all the power, of a Lord Chancellor. This high employment he held under Queen Elizabeth near twenty years : a minister considerably learned, of remarkable prudence and honesty ; serving his country with the integrity of a good man, and preserving, through the whole course of his prosperity, that moderation and plainness of manners which adorn a great man. His second wife was a daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, who had been preceptor to Edward the Sixth, and of whom historians have made honourable mention for his skill in the learned languages. Neither have they forgot to celebrate this Lady, on the same account. To the truth of which even an enemy bore testimony ; while he reproached her with having translated, from the Latin, *Parsons the Jesuit.*

### CHANCELLOR BACON. 3

Bishop Jewel's apology for the Church of England.

SUCH were the parents of Francis Bacon, whose life I am writing. Of two sons, by this marriage, he was the youngest: and born at York-House in the Strand, the twenty-second of January 1561. As he had the good fortune to come into the world at a period of time when arts and sciences were esteemed and cultivated, by the Great and Powerful, almost in the same degree they are now neglected; so he brought with him a capacity for every kind of knowledge, useful and ornamental. An original genius, formed not to receive implicit notions of thinking and reasoning from what was admitted and taught before him; but to prescribe laws himself, in the empire of learning, to his own and succeeding ages!

He gave marks, very yearly, of a pregnant and happy disposition, far above his years. We are told that Queen Elizabeth took a particular delight in trying him with questions; and received so much satisfaction from the good sense and manliness of his answers, that she was wont to call him, in mirth, her young Lord Keeper. One saying of his deserves to be remembered. The



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Queen having asked him his age, while he was yet a boy; he answered readily, that he was just two years younger than her happy reign.

OF his education I know no particulars, till he was sent to study in the university of Cambridge under Dr. Whitgift, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury: and I find he was entered of Trinity College in his twelfth year\*. The progress he made was rapid and uncommon: for he had run through the whole circle of the liberal arts, as they were then taught, before he was sixteen. But what is far more surprising; he began, even then, to see through the emptiness and futility of the philosophy in vogue: and to conjecture, that useful knowledge must be raised on other foundations, and built up with other materials, than had been employed through a tract of many Centuries backward. In this, his own genius, aided by a singular discernment, must have been his only preceptor: for in matters of reasoning, the authority of Aristotle was still acknowledged infallible in the schools; as much as that of the Pope, in affairs of religion, had lately been acknowledged there, and every where else. And our Author may be justly stiled the

\* 16th of June, 1573.



first great Reformer of Philosophy. He had the prepossessions, the voluminous and useless reading, nay he had the vanity of men grown old in contrary opinions, to struggle with: yet he lived to see a considerable revolution on his side. Another age brought over the learned of all nations to his party.

It may be justly wondered at, that the Lord Keeper, a minister of great observation on men and things, should have sent his son to travel at the age of sixteen; as we find he did: for, by a letter from Sir Amias Powlet, then Ambassador in France, it is certain that young Bacon was at Paris, and under his roof, in the year 1577. We need but look around us, to be convinced how little our youth of quality, who visit foreign countries about that age, are wont to profit either in taste, wisdom, or morals. But perhaps he discovered in his son a maturity of discretion and judgement beyond what is common to that early season of life. However that was, the ambassador conceived a very favourable opinion of Bacon; for he sent him over to the Queen with a commission that required secrecy and dispatch: of which he acquitted himself with applause, and then returned to finish his travels. The native bent of his mind, strongly turned to reflection

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and enquiry, suffered him not to stop short at the study of languages; but led him higher, to remark accurately on the customs and manners of those that spoke them; on the characters of their Princes, and on the constitution of their several governments. In proof of this, there is still extant, among his works, a paper of observations on the general state of Europe, written by him shortly after this time; as I have discovered by a circumstance mentioned in it \*.

HE was the youngest son, and he seems to have been the favorite of his father; who had set apart a considerable sum of money to purchase an estate for him, in his absence. But before that kind intention could take effect, the Lord Keeper died suddenly, by the following accident. He was under the hands of his barber, and, the weather being sultry, had ordered a window before him to be thrown open. As he was become very corpulent, he presently fell asleep in the current of fresh air that was blowing in upon him; and awaked after some time, distempered all over. Why, said he to the servant, did you suffer me to sleep thus exposed? The fellow replied, that

\* He says that Henry III. of France was then 30 years old: now that King began his reign in 1574, at the age of 24 years. So that Bacon was then nineteen.

he durst not presume to disturb him. Then, said the Lord Keeper, by your civility I lose my Life: and so removed into his bed chamber, where he died a few days after. Thus there remained to his youngest son only the small proportion of a sum, which was to be divided among five brothers.

THE narrowness of his circumstances obliged him to think of some profession for a subsistence: and he applied himself, more through necessity than choice, to the study of the common law. For that purpose he placed himself in the society of Gray's Inn: where his superior talents rendered him the ornament of the House; as the gentleness and affability of his deportment won him the affection of all it's members. In his profession he quickly rose to so much eminence and reputation, that, at the age of twenty-eight years, he was named by Elizabeth her learned council extraordinary: a distinction which he needed no assistance from his father's merit with her to deserve. It was however next to impossible that so noble a genius, born to embrace the whole compass of science, should confine its researches within the narrow and perplexed study of precedents and authorities: a study hedged round with brambles and thorns, dark and barbarous in it's beginnings, and rendered in it's progress still

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more obscure, by the learned dulness of commentators and compilers; men, for the most part, of indefatigable industry, and of no spirit or discernment. Accordingly we find that, in this interval, he often gave full scope to his conceptions; surveying the whole state of learning, observing its defects, and imagining the proper methods to supply them. This he first attempted in a treatise which he entitled **THE GREATEST BIRTH OF TIME**; as appears from a letter, written after his retirement, to Father Fulgentio the Venetian, in which he passes a kind of censure on the pompous and swelling title prefixed to it. Though the Piece itself is lost, it appears to have been the first outlines of that amazing design, which he afterwards filled up and finished in his grand Instauration of the sciences. As there is not a more amusing, perhaps a more useful speculation, than that of tracing the history of the human mind, if I may so express myself, in its progression from truth to truth, and from discovery to discovery; the intelligent reader would doubtless have been pleased to see, in the tract I am speaking of, by what steps and gradations a spirit like Bacon's advanced in building up, for more than thirty years together, his new and universal theory. He thought himself



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born for the use of human kind; and in the letter above mentioned styles himself, the servant of posterity.

THESE few hints for filling up this first part of our Author's life, trivial and unsatisfactory as they may appear, I have yet been obliged to glean here and there in the rubbish of several collections, where they lay scattered, without order or connection. But I shall no longer regard Bacon as a mere philosopher; as a man of speculation who conversed only with books and his own thoughts, in the shade of retirement and leisure. The course of his fortunes produced him on the great theatre of the world, involved him in business, and complicated him with the most considerable persons of the age he lived in. He was honorably employed by one Prince, and highly preferred under another. It will be therefore necessary, that this history may have it's due extent and usefulness, to exhibit a general prospect of the two reigns in which Bacon flourished and fell, at least in their principal points of view. The characters of those with whom he had any connection will illustrate his; and shew it is a truer, as well as a fuller light.

I HAVE yet another reason for enlarging this account beyond the ordinary limits. Our



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Author's letters are written, many of them at least, on public occasions, and may be considered as the most authentic vouchers for several remarkable occurrences, in which he himself was an actor, and well acquainted with the secret motives on which others acted. But as those things are for the most part only hinted at, or no farther opened than to serve the present purpose of his letter; they will require to be developed at some length, and ranged into their proper places.

ELIZABETH had a larger share of good sense and sound judgement than is commonly to be met with among women; accompanied with a greatness of mind and steadiness of purpose that might do honor to the best of men. These her natural endowments received much, though severe, improvement from the dangers she was exposed to in the first part of her life. She grew up in a strict attention over her own actions, even over her looks and words, from the rigor of her father's temper, and particularly from the jealous cruelty of her sister's administration: a short but memorable period of time! when England beheld, under a female reign, such instances of merciless rage, such scenes of horror, as had of old startled the Roman World, under a Nero and

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a Domitian. The dreadful genius of that superstition, to which she had devoted herself, then exerted it's spirit undisguised, in betraying, tormenting, butchering, by the ministry of inhuman priests and inquisitors, whoever would not profess what he could not possibly believe. If we may credit historians, they had even doomed Elizabeth herself to die: and she escaped, miraculously, not by the kindness, but the policy of Philip; himself a tyrant, the coolest and most determined of these latter ages.

AT her accession to the throne, she found her revenues anticipated or exhausted; her kingdom, through the pernicious bigotry of her predecessor, disjointed and broken of it's vigor within: at the same time unsupported by allies and without consideration abroad. Her good sense led her to see, by the errors of her father and her sister, that she could expect to reign with security, only by deserving the confidence and gaining the love of the nation: and that in order thereto, she must propose to herself no other end of ruling but the happiness and honor of all her people. This system of policy, so simple in itself, so glorious in it's consequences, and yet by princes so seldom pursued, she adhered to steadily, almost

uniformly, through a long and triumphant reign : for this very reason triumphant.

THE reformation of religion she attempted and effected; at a season when her power was unconfirmed, and in probable danger from intestine commotions. For revolutions in religion are apt to put the whole constitution of a society into ferment, even more strongly than alterations in government; as every individual is immediately actuated by what seems to him of highest and most lasting concern. She kept awake, and animated, with wonderful address, the divisions in Scotland, in France, in the Netherlands: and that with more justice on her part than is usually observed by princes when they would do ill offices to their neighbours. The sovereigns of those countries, when they agreed in nothing else, were ever combined in a common enmity to her: at a time too when she had nothing to oppose against their pretensions, their conspiracies, their open attacks, but her own courage and the native strength of England alone. And yet, by helping forward the reformation in Scotland; by supporting the protestants in France; by the wise and well-managed supplies she sent to the Dutch, who were struggling hard for their lives and liberties with an unrelenting tyrant: by this series

of conduct, steadily pursued, she triumphed over all opposition, and rendered herself the arbitress of Europe. For it may be affirmed, that her administration made a greater impression on all the states round her than it received itself from any: an undoubted proof of it's firmness and active vigor.

WHEN she came to the crown, she found the nation four millions in debt: a sum then almost incredible! and yet her œconomy alone enabled her to discharge it. The coin, which had been much embased by Henry the eighth, and by Mary wholly neglected, she quickly restored to it's just standard; and therewith the public faith and credit. Her magazines she carefully replenished with arms, ammunition, warlike stores of every kind: and the youth all over England were ordered to be duly trained in military exercises. Her navy was fallen to decay, and almost abandoned. This she set herself to repair, with an attention, which the great bulwark of this kingdom will ever deserve from a prince, who understands in what his own strength and that of his dominions naturally consist. Her fleet was at last a match for the mighty Armada of Spain: that Armada boasted to be invincible, and which was in truth a desperate effort of the whole power and resent-



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ment of her bitterest enemy. Her victory over him, as entire as it was glorious, gave security and renown to this Island: and whatever the partiality of foreign writers may have insinuated to the contrary, she owed it to her own heroical conduct, and the unexampled bravery of her subjects.

SHE was the first of our princes who pursued, in any considerable degree, the only sure method of making England great and powerful; by encouraging and extending our commerce: which, under her protection, grew high, and spread itself through the North and to both the Indies. In a word, such was her conduct, such her good fortune, in this island and on the Continent, that her allies had the strongest confidence in her assistance and good faith: that her enemies stood in awe of her power, and were forced to an unwilling approbation of her prudence. The applause of such as think they have cause to hate, and distress us, is the sincerest, as it is the noblest praise. Her oeconomy was admirable. She husbanded the public money for her people's ease: she laid it out, on proper occasions, for their safety and honor. The undertakings of the government were never greater; the charge was never less. This gives the highest idea of her ministry, and



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places their characters, in general, above imputation or reproach.

OF Sir Nicholas Bacon, our Author's father, I have already given some account: and shall only add here, that he never aspired beyond the rank he brought with him to court. His moderation in all other respects was the same. When the Queen visited him at his seat in Hertfordshire, she told him with an air of pleasantry, that his house was too little for him. No, replied the Lord Keeper; but your Majesty has made me too great for my house.

WALSINGHAM, in his private character, was of unblemished honesty. As a minister he had singular sagacity in procuring intelligence; which he knew to apply, with great dexterity, to the purposes of government: devoting himself with so generous a self-neglect, to the service of his country, that he gained a reputation for contempt of riches, which would have been highly revered in the best times of antiquity; and will go near, in these days, to be thought either folly or frenzy.

THE Lord Treasurer Burleigh, for his consummate abilities as a statesman, was reckoned the first name of his age: and is still pointed out as a pattern, which we rather wish, than expect,

to see fully copied by his successors in power. As he had strong natural parts, and was of unwearied application to business, his experience must have been universal and unequalled; for he was at the head of the government almost forty years. He seems, in particular, to have been eminently possessed of that intrepidity of head, that civil courage, so necessary in a great minister; and without which no minister will ever do any thing truly noble, or of lasting utility to mankind. Inviolably attached to his mistress, he served her with equal fidelity and success: and had the singular felicity to promote the good of his country by the same arts that he employed to gratify the inclinations of his sovereign.

THE glory of this princess will receive a new lustre by comparing the state of England with that of almost all other nations in Europe, at the same time. It must have been no common addition to the tranquillity and happiness of our ancestors, that they enjoyed both, uninterrupted, for such a length of years; while Scotland and France, Spain and Holland, were torn with continual divisions, and bleeding by the wounds of foreign and domestic wars. Hers too was the age of heroes both in arts and arms. Great captains, able statesmen, writers of the highest order arose,

and under her influence flourished together. Thus Bacon had all the incentives that could kindle him up to a generous ambition, and quicken his emulation in the pursuit of knowledge and honest fame. And indeed his letters remain a proof, that if he courted the proper opportunities of raising his fortune, he lost none that might improve and enlarge his mind \*. As the Lord Treasurer had married his aunt, we find him frequent in his applications to that minister for some place of credit and service in the state. He professes too that his views on this head are as moderate, as his aims another way are ambitious and vast; for that he had taken all philosophy for his province. The Treasurer interested himself so far on his behalf as to procure for him, against violent opposition, the office of Register to the Star-Chamber, worth about 1600l a year: but it was only in reversion, and did not fall to him till near twenty years afterwards. Neither did he obtain any other preferment all this reign: though his winning address, his eloquence, his large and systematical learning had raised him to the admiration of the greatest men at court. He was particularly esteemed and patronized by Robert

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 7.

Devereux, the famous and unfortunate Earl of Essex; to whom he attached himself in his younger years, and by whose interest in the Queen, he flattered himself with the prospect of bettering his condition. Elizabeth herself shewed him several marks of distinction, admitted him often to her presence, and even consulted him on the state of her affairs: as her ministers sometimes made use of his pen in the vindication of her government. And yet, notwithstanding these appearances, he met with no preferment from that Queen answerable to the idea we have of his merit, or her discernment in the distribution of favours. This deserves some explanation; as it will discover to us the true genius of those ministers, who, pretending to merit themselves, are jealous of it in all other men; who are equally poor-spirited and aspiring.

THE whole court was at this time rent into factions, headed on one part by the Earl of Essex; on the other by the Cecils, father and son. Essex was then in all the flower of his youth, and remarkable for the gracefulness of his person. In his nature brave, ambitious, popular; and what is uncommon, at once the favorite of the Sovereign and of the Nation. Fond of military glory; liberal to profusion; devoted entirely to his friends,



and keeping no measures with his enemies; of competent learning himself, and a signal benefactor to learned men. One quality he had, which distinguishes him eminently from such as are personally beloved by princes: in the height of his favor he received the admonitions, the remonstrances of his friends with all gentleness; and was ever most patient of the truth. But then he wanted those arts which are most necessary in a courtier; and are indeed the only qualities which the rabble of courtiers value themselves upon; circumspection, cunning, affectation of secrecy, obsequiousness to the humors of their superiors, and a mean but anxious attention to their own interest, whether at the expence of their patrons, or of their contry. A different turn of mind gave the Earl's enemies great advantages against him. They failed not to represent to the Queen, on several occasions, that this young Lord, not satisfied with the distinction of being her favorite, pretended to be her master; and prescribed to her judgement on affairs of state, with a haughtiness ill becoming the distance betwixt a Sovereign, and the creature of her bounty. Such insinuations, as they were partly true, could not fail of making an impression on Elizabeth, who was naturally high spirited, and infinitely jealous of her



authority. Though she had a particular fondness for the Earl, she took occasion every now and then to mortify his pride by refusing to advance those friends of his whom he recommended for preferment. After his return from the expedition to Cadiz, in which he had behaved himself with much gallantry, she raised his enemy, Sir Robert Cecil, to be Secretary of state; tho' he had earnestly solicited that post for another. He had often applied to her in behalf of Bacon, and asked for him, with all the warmth of friendship, the place of Solicitor General; but had been always refused. Cecil, who mortally hated Essex, and had entertained a secret jealousy of Bacon, on account of his superior talents, represented the latter to the Queen as a man of mere speculation; as one wholly given up to philosophical enquiries, new indeed and amusing, but fanciful and unsolid: and therefor more likely to distract her affairs than to serve her usefully and with proper judgment. Bacon however was this man's cousin-german; his father and the Lord Burleigh having married two sisters: but ambition knows neither merit nor relations. This unworthy treatment, from so near a kinsman, carried Bacon into very free expostulations on his courtly artifices, as he endeavoured in secret to crush the man whom

yet he pretended openly to serve: and these repeated disappointments sunk so deep into his spirit, that he was several times on the point of retiring for ever, and even of hiding his grief and resentment in some foreign country. Essex, who could but ill brook the mortification of a denial, finding himself unable to serve his friend in a public way, would needs make up the loss to him out of his own private fortune: and if we may believe Bushel \*, he bestowed upon him about this time Twitenham-Park and it's garden of Paradise. Whether it was that or some other of his lands, the donation was so very considerable, that Bacon, as himself acknowledges in his apology, sold it afterwards, even at an under price, for no less than eighteen hundred pounds. A bounty so noble, accompanied too, as we know it was, with all those agreeable distinctions that, to a mind delicately sensible, are more obliging than the bounty itself, must kindle in the breast of a good man the most ardent sentiments of gratitude, and create an inviolable attachment to such a benefactor. What then are we to think of Bacon, when we find him, after his nobleman's unhappy fate, publishing to all England a declaration of the

\* Bushel's abridg. post. p. 1.

treasons of Robert Earl of Essex? This behaviour drew upon him a heavy and general hatred at that time; which was not extinguished even by his death, but continues still, in the writings of more than one historian; an imputation on his memory. As this transaction is of importance to his moral character, I will lay it before the reader as impartially as I can.

ELIZABETH had raised that young Lord, through a series of honors, to be Earl Marshal of England: and was every day giving him new proofs of a particular and uncommon esteem. This only served to exasperate his enemies. They were powerful, and closely united: But as they durst not attack him openly, they had recourse to dark and sorer arts of vengeance; against which his openness of temper, unsuspecting and improvident, was no wise guarded. In truth, his imperious humour, which he could seldom disguise, aided their designs; for it often broke forth into downright abuse and scorn of those who thwarted his projects, or dissented from his opinions: and once, in some dispute with the Queen herself, turned his back abruptly upon her with all the marks of disrespect and contempt. Provoked at this insolence, Elizabeth, forgetting her sex and the dignity of her character, struck the Earl a

box on the ear: which he on his part, with a meanness of passion yet less excusable in a man, resented so highly as to lay his hand on his sword, against a woman and his sovereign. No subsequent favours could wear this imaginary affront out of his memory; though she pardoned him the insult that occasioned it, and sent him shortly after into Ireland, as her vicegerent, with a commission almost unlimited. His conduct there has not escaped the censure of historians, who have remarked severely on the unjustifiable treaty he made with the arch-rebel Tyrone, on the private conference they held together, and on his precipitate return to England, against the Queen's express orders. This last ill step he was betrayed into, if we may believe Osborn \*, by an artifice of Cecil: who first inflamed Elizabeth's suspicions of the Earl, and then stopped all vessels that were to sail for Ireland except one which he ordered thither on purpose with a feigned report of her death. Fatally deceived by this intelligence, Essex sailed away in a hurry for England, attended only by a few of his friends. The Queen received him without any emotion either of anger or affection, and having confined him to his own

\* Mem. of Queen Elizabeth p. 458.

house, ordered his conduct to be examined in the star-chamber. At this usage of him, however gracious and moderate, the people, whose idol he was, loudly exclaimed: and their unseasonable partiality, represented by his adversaries as of dangerous tendency to the state, kindled anew the Queen's indignation against him. Thus, that popularity he had so eagerly courted, and so much depended upon, served now only to hasten on his destruction. He was sentenced by the council to be removed from his place at that board; to be suspended from his offices of Earl Marshal and Master of the ordnance, and to be imprisoned during the Queen's pleasure. Having humbled him thus far, she stopt short; forbidding his sentence to be entered on record, and still continuing him master of the Horse. She even gave him the full enjoyment of his liberty, upon his expressing a perfect resignation to her pleasure; but withal advised him to be his own keeper. His seeming repentance was of short duration; for upon the Queen's refusal to grant him the farm of sweet wines, which he had very imprudently petitioned for, he returned out of the country, and again abandoned himself to all the impetuosity of his temper; or rather to the pernicious suggestions of his followers. Indeed, the



presumption that naturally grows out of successful ambition, and the interested counsels of those whose fortunes were involved with his, seem to have entirely turned his head: for his actions henceforward were the genuine effects of frenzy and despair. In conjunction with his friends, of several conditions, he meditated no less an attempt than to seize on the palace, to make himself master of the Queen's person, and to banish from about her all those whom he reputed his enemies. Never was conspiracy so ill laid, or conducted with so little probability of success. The court was presently alarmed, his house invested, himself and his friends made prisoners, without any resistance on his part; for tho' he was embarked in a kind of rebellion, he knew not how to be a rebel. The particulars of his trial are foreign to my purpose. It was managed against him by Sir Edward Coke, the Attorney-General, and by Bacon as one of the Queen's Council. It ought not to be forgot that the former treated this unfortunate \* Nobleman with a strain of petulant dulness and scurrility that makes us condemn his talent as a pleader, while we abhor the purpose to which he made it subservient. Bacon was

\* State Tryals, vol. I. p. 205.

more moderate and decent. The crime was proved by a cloud of witnesses: and the unanimous suffrage of his peers found him guilty. After his sentence he appeared wholly indifferent to life or death: tho' the Queen seemed still irresolute, or rather inclining to save him. He died with the tenderness of a penitent, and the firmness of a hero: tho' the Marshal de Biron jested on his deportment in that last scene of life, as suiting rather a monk than a soldier.

THE untimely fate of this nobleman, who died on a scaffold in the prime and vigor of his years, excited universal pity, and was murmured against by all conditions of people. Their reflections on the prevailing party at court, even on the Queen herself, were so bold and injurious, that the administration thought it necessary to vindicate their conduct in a public appeal to the people\*. This task was assigned to Bacon, even then in high esteem for his excellencies as a writer. Some say it was by his enemies insidiously imposed on him, to divert the national resentment from themselves upon a particular person, who was known to have lived in friendship with Essex, and whom they intended to ruin in the general esteem. If

\* V. A declaration of the treasons of R. Earl of Essex, Vol. IV. p. 386.

such was their intention, they succeeded but too well in it: never man incurred more universal or more lasting censure than Bacon by this writing. He was every where traduced as one who endeavoured to murder the good name of his benefactor, after the ministry had destroyed his person. His life was even threatened: and he went in daily hazard of assassination. This obliged him to publish, in his own defence, the apology we find among his writings. It is long and elaborate; but not, perhaps, in every part satisfactory. Let us believe him on his own testimony \*, that he had never done that Nobleman any ill offices with the Queen; though she herself had, it seems, insinuated the contrary: that on the other hand he had always, during the time of their intimacy, given him advice no less useful than sincere; that he had wished, nay, endeavoured, the Earl's preservation even at last, purely from affection to him, without any regard to his own interest in that endeavour: let all this be allowed; some blemish will still remain on his character.

Essex deserved the fate he underwent; but he had paid his debt to justice: and the commonwealth had now nothing to fear from any of

\* Apology, Vol. IV, p. 429.

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his party. The declaration above mentioned could therefor be intended, only to still the present clamors of the multitude: and though the matter of it might be true, Bacon was not the man who should have published those truths. He had been long and highly indebted to the Earl's friendship, almost beyond the example even of that age. In another man this proceeding might not have been blameable: in him it cannot be excused. Sir Henry Yelverton, in the next reign, ventured on the displeasure both of the King and his minion, rather than do the ministry of his office \*, by pleading against the Earl of Somerset, who had made him Solicitor-General. Had Bacon refused that invidious part, there were others, among the herd of aspiring and officious Lawyers, ready enough to have performed it: and his very enemies must have thought more advantageously of him for declining a task, in itself of no essential importance to the state, and in him unjust to friendship, obligation, gratitude, the most sacred regards among men.

ELIZABETH survived her favorite about a year: and, if we may credit Osborn †, grief and remorse for his fate accompanied her to the grave ‡.

\* Aul. Coqui. p. 186. † Osborn, p. 459.

‡ He is the first author who mentions the story of the ring.

## CHANCELLOR BACON. 29

She died the twenty fourth of March 1603, in the fulness of days and honor. Her reign had been long and triumphant: and she through the whole course of it preserved, what she so justly merited, the love and veneration of her people; the truest glory, the rarest felicity of a Sovereign. Her successor was James the Sixth of Scotland, under whom Bacon ascended, by several steps, to the highest dignity of the law.

THIS prince, the most unvalike that ever lived, was born in the midst of civil commotions, at a time when his whole kingdom was torn into factions, betwixt the party who had espoused the interests of his mother, and those who had declared for him. After he had taken the administration into his own hands, he was hardly ever his own master; suffering himself to be led implicitly by the cabal in whose power he then happened to be. The moment he thought himself at liberty from either, like a boy escaped from under the eye of a rigid preceptor, he forgot all his uneasiness, and abandoned himself to his favorite amusements of hawking and hunting, as if his kingdom had been in the profoundest tranquillity. He grew up in an unaccountable fondness for favorites. The first, who took deep root with him, was likewise the worst; not only encouraging



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him in a total inapplication to business, but tincturing his youth with the poison of all debauchery. The name of this man was Stuart\*, afterwards Earl of Arran; one who had great and dangerous vices, without a single virtue, private or public, to atone for them: an open scoffer at the obligations of morality, insolent, rapacious, sanguinary; hated by, and hating, all good men. The honestest part of the nobility often remonstrated against the credit and pernicious influence of this minion: James acknowledged the justice of their remonstrances; banished him several times from court; and several times received him into new favor. He was at length shot † by a private hand in revenge for the death of the Earl of Morton, to which he had basely contributed.

JAMES hated the church of Scotland: and confirmed it's authority ‡. He declared the attempt of those Lords, who had rescued him out of the hands of Arran and Lennox, to be just and serviceable ||: he afterwards banished them, and would have confiscated their estates on that very account. When they had made themselves masters of his person a second time, he pronounced them all traitors; and pardoned them §.

\* Melvil's Mem. P. 131. † P. 200. ‡ P. 132.  
|| P. 139. §. P. 169.

## CHANCELLOR BACON. 31

ELIZABETH, who knew his genius perfectly, sent Mr. Wotton on an embassy to him in 1585. Her intention was to divert him from a marriage with the Princess of Denmark, and to give his counsels what other turn her interests might require. The ambassador, a man of address and intrigue, had by long habitude, learnt to personate all characters, and to assume, with an ease that seemed altogether unaffected, whatever shape might serve most effectually the purposes of his superiors \*. At the age of twenty-one he had been employed to sound the intentions of the court of France; and had well nigh duped the famous Constable de Montmorency, a minister grown grey in the observation of human falsehood and artifice. To this natural talent he had now added the experience of thirty years more. By accompanying King James in his sports; by falling in frankly, and as it were naturally, with all his passions; by making a jest of business; by entertaining him pleasantly with an account of foreign fashions and follies; this man gained an absolute ascendant not only over his understanding, but over his humor. His most faithful subjects, who had served him longest and best, who had even warned him against the subtleties

\* Melvil, Page 161.

of this stranger, he received with approbation or dislike, just as Wotton inspired him \*. He was even brought by him to be seriously persuaded, that the King of Denmark was descended from a race of merchants: and that an alliance with his daughter was, therefor, infinitely beneath a King of Scotland's dignity.

SUCH was the Prince who now mounted that throne, which Elizabeth had filled with so great capacity and reputation. The union of the two crowns, in the person of one Sovereign, was extremely dreaded by foreigners, and in particular by Henry the Fourth of France. The accession of a new kingdom to the native force of England, which even alone had been long formidable on the continent; the alliance of James with the most potent monarch of the North; his relation to the house of Lorraine, which had lately embroiled all France, rendered such fears very probable. But his conduct dissipated them for ever: and all Europe quickly saw, that no people but his own had any thing to apprehend from his power. At his arrival in England, he bestowed titles and honors with so wild a profusion, that there hardly remained any other mark of distinction but that of having escaped them. The public stood amazed †:

\* Melvil, p. 164. † Wilson, p. 7.

## CHANCELLOR BACON. 33

and pasquinades were openly affixed, undertaking to assist weaker memories to a competent knowledge of the Nobility. Sir Francis Bacon, who had been early in his homage, and application for favor, to the new Sovereign, was knighted by him in person: and has left us the following picture of him, strongly touched in it's most obvious features \*. " His speech, says he, is " swift and cursory; and in the full dialect of " his country: in matters of business, short; in " general discourse, large. He affecteth popularity, by gracing such as he hath heard to be " popular; not by any fashions of his own. He " is thought somewhat general in his favors: " and his easiness of access is rather because he " is much abroad and in a croud, than that he " giveth easy audience. He hasteneth to a mixture of both kingdoms and occasions faster, " perhaps, than policy will well bear."

In 1605, Sir Francis Bacon recommended himself to the king's particular notice, as well as to the general esteem of his cotemporaries, by publishing a work he had long meditated; *The Progress and Advancement of Learning*. The great aim of this treatise, no less original in the design than happy in the execution, was to fur-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 73.

vey accurately the whole state and extent of the intellectual world ; what parts of it had been unsuccessfully cultivated ; what lay still neglected, or unknown : and by what methods these might be discovered, and those improved, to the farther advantage of society and human nature. By exposing the errors and imperfections of our knowledge, he led mankind into the only right way of reforming the one, and supplying the other : he taught them to know their wants. He even went farther, and himself pointed out to them general methods of correction and improvement in the whole circle of arts and sciences. This work he first published in English : but to render it of more extensive use, he recommended a translation of it into Latin \* to Dr. Playfer of Cambridge. Playfer, with the scrupulous accuracy of a grammarian, was more attentive to fashion his stile to purity and roundness of periods, made out of the phraseology he had gleaned from classic writers, than to render his author's meaning in plain and masculine language. After the sight of a specimen or two, Sir Francis did not encourage him to proceed in it. He himself, after his retirement, very much enlarged and corrected the original ; and with the assistance of some friends

\* Tennison's Baconiana, p. 25.



turned the whole into Latin. This is the edition of 1623<sup>\*</sup>; and stands as the first part to his great Instauration of the Sciences.

I HAVE already observed that Cecil, now Earl of Salisbury, opposed the progress of our author's fortune under Elizabeth: and he seems to have observed the same conduct towards him in the present reign, till he had fixed himself in the king's confidence so firmly as to be above all fear of a rival. Besides him, Sir Francis Bacon found a violent and lasting enemy in a man of his own profession, Sir Edward Coke †; who, with great parts, had many and signal failings. The quarrel betwixt them seems to have been personal: and it lasted to the end of their lives. Coke was jealous of Bacon's reputation in many parts of knowledge: by whom, again, he was envied for the high reputation he had acquired in one; each aiming to be admired, particularly for that in which the other excelled. This affectation in two extraordinary men has something in it very mean, and is not uncommon. The former was the greatest lawyer of his time; but could be nothing more. If the latter was not so, we can ascribe it only to his aiming at a more exalted

<sup>\*</sup> Telford's Baconiana, p. 27. † Stephen's Collec. p. 2

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character. The universality of his genius could not be confined within one inferior province of learning. If learning thus divided is not so proper to raise a singular name in one way, it serves to enlarge the understanding on every side, and to enlighten it in all it's views. As the name of Sir Edward Coke will occur oftener than once in this history, and as he stood in particular competition to Bacon, I beg leave to dwell a little longer on his character. In his pleadings he was apt to insult over misery. Of this we have a detestable instance in his behaviour to Sir Walter Raleigh \*. He inveighed against that brave man on his trial with all the bitterness of cruelty, and in a stile of such abandoned railing, as bordered almost on fury: I wish I could not add, that this bitterness, this intemperance of tongue, seem to be the genuine effusions of his heart †. He conversed it seems more with books than men; and among

\* State Tryals, Vol. I. p. 207, &c.

† The offices of Attorney and Solicitor-General have been rocks upon which many aspiring Lawyers have made shipwreck of their virtue and human nature. Some of those Gentlemen have acted at the bar as if they thought themselves, by the duty of their places, absolved from all the obligations of truth, honor and decency. But their names are upon record, and will be transmitted to after-ages with those characters of reproach and abhorrence that are due to the worst sort of murderers; those that murder under the sanction of justice.

the latter, with those only to whom he could dictate and give the law. The consequence of which was, that his conversation had all the air of a lecture; and that he retailed for new, a hundred stories that were either stale or trivial. He affected rallery, which was by no means his talent. His wit was often ill aimed, as it was always indelicate and vulgar; the rough horse-play of a pedant. Though he had accumulated immense wealth, in his profession and by several rich marriages, he was of a sordid avarice; a severe master, a gripping landlord. In prosperity insolent; dejected and fawning in adversity: the same poorness of spirit influencing his behaviour in both conditions. One example of this may serve in place of several. After his disgrace, he submissively courted Buckingham's brother to a match with his daughter: in the height of his favor, he had rejected the same proposal with scorn. His profound skill in the common law has been universally allowed: and to this we cannot have a more unquestionable witness than Sir Francis Bacon\*; one every way fit to judge, and an enemy. He was raised to be Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1606, and of the King's Bench in 1613. On the Bench he was above corruption;

\* Vol. IV. p. 3.

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and had this saying frequently in his mouth, that a Judge should neither give nor take a bribe. In the case of Peacham \*, in the business of commendams, he behaved himself with the honesty and firmness of one who knew that a Judge ought neither to be flattered nor menaced out of his integrity. Towards the latter part of his life, he struck in with the country party in parliament, and stood in the breach against the arbitrary measures of James and Charles. He died in the reign of the latter, aged 86 years.

AT length Sir Francis Bacon obtained the place he had so long expected: and in 1607 was declared Solicitor-General. This preferment was the effect of many letters and much instance on his part, to the Earl of Salisbury, the Lord Chancellor Egerton, and the King himself. Neither do I find that he was ever promoted to any post without repeated and earnest application to ministers and favorites: a reflection that may serve, at once to mortify, and instruct, an ambitious man of parts.

JAMES had, from the beginning of his reign, passionately desired an union of Scotland and England: but his unreasonable partiality to the former, reckoning it as an equal half of the

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 145.



island, rendered the design abortive. Though Sir Francis Bacon labored this argument with all the arts of wit and reason, his eloquence, powerful as it was, had no effect on the house of Commons. The parliament even shewed itself averse to this union, in proportion as the court appeared zealous for it. The new Sovereign's conduct had alarmed them. They saw, that, with a strong disposition to be profuse, he was absolutely in the power of favorites: and that some of the least valuable among his subjects were most in his favor. They saw farther, that he began already to propagate maxims of government destructive to liberty, and inconsistent with the tenor of the constitution. These things filled observing men with apprehensions for the future, which unhappily were but too well founded. The whole sum of his politics, both now and afterwards, was to distaste and alienate his subjects at home; to dishonor both himself and them abroad. It was a reign of embassies and negotiations, alike fruitless and expensive: a reign of favorites and proclamations, of idle amusements and arbitrary impositions. It was besides the great æra of flattery. The ancient national simplicity of manners which ever accompanies magnanimity, and manly freedom of speech the noble



effect of both, were now in a great measure lost; altered and effeminated into prostitute adulation and servile homage. This was become the fashionable language among the Clergy as well as Laity; and James heard himself daily addressed to, by the titles of sacred and divine: titles which discover the meanness rather than the dignity of human nature; and which, applied to him, were glaringly ridiculous. He had not one princely quality. The arts of governing a kingdom in peace he either did not, or would not understand: and his horror of war was constitutional and unconquerable. It may therefor seem unaccountable, that a king of this temper should treat his parliaments with more haughtiness than any of his predecessors had ever done. But he had been told that England was neither to be exhausted nor provoked: and his actions shewed that he believed so, according to the letter. The truth is, that as pusillanimity will talk bigger on some occasions than true valor on any, he meant to make himself formidable to his people, that they might not discover how much he was afraid of them.

THOUGH he did not succeed in the union of the kingdoms, he found his judges, in an affair of a similar kind, more complaisant than the great

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council of the nation had been: I mean the naturalization of all Scotsmen born since his accession to the throne of England. This was adjudged by Sir Edward Coke in the great case of Calvin\*; as it had been argued at large before all the Judges by Sir Francis Bacon. The affair is now no longer of importance to either kingdom: but one assertion of our author, on that occasion, ought not to be forgot. He roundly affirms, that monarchies do not subsist like other governments, by a precedent law; and that submission to them is grounded upon nature.

IN 1610 he published another treatise, entitled, *Of the Wisdom of the Ancients*. This work bears the same stamp of an original and inventive genius with his other performances. Resolving not to tread in the steps of those who had gone before him, men, according to his own expression, not learned beyond certain common places; he strikes out a new tract for himself, and enters into the most secret recesses of this wild and shadowy region; so as to appear new on a known and beaten subject. Upon the whole, if we cannot bring ourselves readily to believe that there is all the physical, moral, political meaning

\* Case of the Post-nati, Vol. IV. p. 185.

veiled under those fables of antiquity, which he has discovered in them, we must own that it required no common penetration to be mistaken with so great an appearance of ingenuity on his side. Though it still remains doubtful whether the Ancients were so knowing as he attempts to shew they were, the variety and depth of his own knowlege are, in that very attempt, unquestionable.

HOBART being advanced to the place of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Sir Francis Bacon succeeded him as Attorney-General in 1613; about three months after the death of his kinsman and enemy the Lord Treasurer Salisbury: a minister fertile in expedients for supplying his master's wants, and well acquainted with the temper of England: a man of dexterity, craft, and intrigue, rather than a great man. The office that Bacon now entered upon was of exorbitant profit for that age. He owns, in one of his letters to the King, that it was worth to him 6000 l. a year: and his employment of Register to the Star-Chamber, which I mentioned above, now brought him in 1600 l. a year more. By what fatality was it that so extraordinary a man did not add to his other virtues that of a reasonable œconomy? Had he done so, it had preserved him from one

transcendent fault: and the other blemishes on his moral name had been lost in the brightness of his intellectual qualities. But he was remarkably subject to the same weakness that so much dishonored his master. His dependents had him wholly in their power, and squandered his fortune away, shamefully and without measure. In a private family, this begot disorder, necessity, corruption: and all England beheld, from the same management in administering the public, the same effects; only more felt and fatal, as they were universal.

IT was not however till the year 1611 that James abandoned himself to one sole favorite. About that time was brought to court Robert Carr a Scotsman, then in the first bloom of his youth, and of distinguished beauty; by which he once engaged the King's attention, and in a little while engrossed all his affection. As he was wholly illiterate, James himself would needs be his preceptor: and it must have been a scene altogether new and ridiculous, to see the Sovereign of three kingdoms daily instructing, in the first elements of grammar, the man who was shortly after to govern those kingdoms. In his bounty to this stripling, he observed no other measure but that of his passion, which was as extreme as it seemed

unaccountable. Car, in four or five years of favor, from a mere adventurer was raised to be Earl of Somerset\*: and amassed an enormous estate of nineteen thousand pounds a year in land; besides plate, money, and jewels to the amount of two hundred thousand pounds more†. And here I cannot omit taking notice, that the foundations of this minion's greatness were laid in the ruin of another subject; of one who deserved, and would have met with very different treatment from a Sovereign, to whom eminent public talents had not been formidable, and therefor hateful. I mean Sir Walter Raleigh, then a prisoner in the tower. Him the King robbed of his lands, by a shameful artifice of the law, to bestow them on Car, who, by accepting, shewed how little he merited this bounty‡: and whose name would scarce have found a place in history, had it not been for his vices; for his scandalous amour with

\* Truth brought to light, p. 89.

† This account is probably exaggerated.

‡ When the Lady Raleigh and her children on their knees implored the King's compassion, they could get no other answer from him, but that he must have the land, he must have it for Car. But let it be remembered too, that Prince Henry, who had all the amiable qualities his father wanted, never left soliciting him till he had obtained the manor of Sherborne, with an intention to restore it to Raleigh it's just owner: though by his untimely death this good intention did not take effect. *Ral. life*, p. 164, 165.



## CHANCELLOR BACON. 45

the Countess of Essex; for procuring her to be divorced from her husband, and for combining with her to poison his friend who had dissuaded him from that ill step. The fate of Sir Thomas Overbury; the dark and dreadful scene of guilt that ushered it in; and the part those two great criminals acted in that tragedy, are recounted by all historians. Though the horrible transaction lay yet wrapt up in darkness, and was not discovered till two years after, remorse and the upbraidings of conscience pursued Somerset every where. Through all the splendor of fortune and favor, the trouble of his mind was visible in his countenance, in his whole deportment\*. He grew by degrees to neglect his person and dress. His sprightliness of temper left him: and his conversation, from being gay and entertaining, was become cold, serious, and gloomy. This alteration in him was quickly followed by a change in the King's affections; which had no deeper or more solid foundation than these external and slight accomplishments. The Courtiers, whom envy and interest render extremely sharp-sighted, quickly discovered this change, and improved it. Luckily for their designs, there now appeared at court another young man, fitted by nature to draw

\* Coke.

the curiosity of James, and to supplant the Earl of Somerset in his favor. This was the famous George Villiers \*, the younger son of a good family in Leicestershire; afterwards Duke of Buckingham. As the surprizing elevation of this youth had a particular influence on the future fortunes, and even on the fall, of Sir Francis Bacon, his character will deserve a place at large in this history.

HIS mother, who could not give him a fortune, bestowed on him such an education as might enable him to acquire one, especially in a court like this. The advantages he owed to nature, such as a handsome face, a body exactly proportioned, an ease and gracefulness in his motions, she had taken care to improve with that elegance of manners, that artificial politeness, and skill of excelling in trifles, which are the last finishings of a French education. In a word, he was just returned from his travels, and accomplished in all those agreeable and frivolous arts, which were a certain recommendation to the favor of James. The Earls of Pembroke and Bedford, with some other Lords who were secret enemies to Somerset, after dressing out this youth with a studied exactness, placed him to advantage in the King's

eye, at a comedy. That monarch was immediately smitten with his face, air, and appearance; which yet he endeavoured for some time to conceal. Nay he carried this dissimulation so far, that he would needs be solicited by the Queen to receive Villiers into his bosom: imagining the world would be thus deceived into a belief that he rather followed her advice, in this matter, than his own inclination. Such was the King-craft on which he so highly valued himself. The Queen was not easily prevailed with to take this step; of which she foresaw all the consequences\*. At last, however, she yielded to the Archbishop's importunity; telling him at the same time, that those who labored most to promote Villiers might be the first to feel his ingratitude. Upon this he was immediately knighted, and declared Gentleman of the Bed Chamber: the herd of courtiers rivalling each other in their offers of friendship and service to him. Some of them even descended to undertake his quarrels †, and brave such as were still in Somerset's interest.

AMONG those who courted the rising favorite, none was more zealous than Sir Francis Bacon; as none was able to serve him more nobly, or more

\* Rushworth of Abbot, ch. 1. † Weldon, p. 84.

usefully. Villiers had at this time sense enough to feel his inexperience in business, and therefore had recourse to our Author for his advice: which he gave him fully in a letter, still extant among his works \*, written with so superior a judgment and so much honest freedom, that it does honor equally to his head and heart. He has ranged his thoughts under seven or eight principal topics of consideration, and entered into an accurate detail of what a minister ought to know and practise. In another letter to him, he has these remarkable words: “ It is now time that you should refer  
 “ your actions chiefly to the good of your Sovereign, and your Country. It is the life of a  
 “ beast always to eat, and never to exercise. In  
 “ this dedication of yourself to the public, I recommend to you principally that which I think  
 “ was never done since I was born; and which,  
 “ not done, hath bred almost a wilderness and  
 “ solitude in the King’s service: which is, that  
 “ you countenance, and encourage and advance  
 “ able and virtuous men in all kinds, degrees,  
 “ and professions.” This excellent advice the favorite received with thankfulness; and neglected.

\* Bacon, Vol. III. p. 564.



THOUGH the King's passion was now wholly diverted upon a new object, he still affected to treat Somerset with kindness and distinction: even after the discovery of his being an accomplice in poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury had rendered this dissimulation not only mean but criminal \*. Yet he continued it to the last, embracing with fondness the man whom he had secretly ordered to be arrested; and entreating him to hasten his return, when he believed he should never see him more. In such trifles he was fond to exert his talent of political management. The Earl's unhappy passion for the young countess of Essex was the source of all his misfortunes, and drew after it the most terrible consequences: ending, as I have already observed, in the murder of his friend; in the ruin of himself, and of her to whom he had treacherously sacrificed that friend. The whole affair is displayed at full length in our Author's charges against these two prime agents in that infernal conspiracy. They were both found guilty†, sentenced to die, and afterwards pardoned by the King, notwithstanding his solemn imprecations to the contrary, on himself and his posterity ‡.

\* Wilson, p. 81.

† May 24, 25,

‡ State Tryals, Vol I. p. 334, 348.



CERTAIN historians have remarked, that there was something, in the behaviour of Somerset before his trial, singular and mysterious: and that his master likewise seemed to labor under a secret anxiety of mind, equally surprizing. The Earl, they pretend, said aloud in the tower, that the King durst not bring him to a trial. Others reject this account as a downright calumny, invented merely to fix a black and cruel imputation on that prince's memory; or affirm at least that it was founded only in popular rumor and malicious conjecture. But that there was more in it than conjecture, may be proved by undoubted authority; by some original letters of Sir Francis Bacon, then Attorney-General, and particularly employed in this very affair. Those letters have, I think, escaped the observation of all our writers: I shall therefor quote from them such passages as may serve to throw some light on this dark transaction; though not enough perhaps to discover the darker motives that influenced the King's and the Earl's behaviour in it.

James himself selected certain persons to examine Somerset with all secrecy, and marked out to them the particular articles on which they were to interrogate him\*. They had withal orders

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 133.

to work upon his obstinate temper by every method of persuasion and terror: to give him now hopes of the King's compassion and mercy; and now to assure him that the evidence was full to convict him, so as there needed neither confession nor supply of examination. Bacon, who was one of them, adds \* that they found his deportment sober and modest, differing apparently from other times. In another letter he has these remarkable words: "That same little charm which  
 " may be secretly infused into Somerset's ear  
 " some hours before his trial was excellently well  
 " thought of by his Majesty: only I could wish  
 " it a little enlarged; for if it be no more but to  
 " spare his blood, he hath a kind of proud humor that may over-work the medicine." All this was to be done with much caution and privacy; for the very Serjeants, appointed to manage part of the trial, were not yet in the secret how the King would have it carried on: and therefor Bacon, to cover from them what he knew of the matter, desired that some general heads of direction might be sent to them all. From hence it appears that James shewed an extreme sollicitude about the Earl's behaviour, and the event of this affair. To what can it be attributed?

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 136.

His affection for Somerset was extinguished : and he lay under the strongest obligations of public honor and justice not to screen, from the censure of the law, a man whose guilt was of the most crying enormity. The Earl's standing mute, or denying that guilt, especially as the proofs of it were strong and pregnant, could bring no possible imputation on his name. Why then all this dark practice ? all these artifices of the persons who examined him, only to make him submit to be tried, and to keep him in temper during his trial ? There is still more \*. James ordered his Attorney-General to forecast and put in writing every possible case with regard to the trial, and accompany them with his own opinion on each ; that no surprize might happen, but that things duly foreseen might have their directions and remedies in readiness. Accordingly Sir Francis Bacon sent a writing of that purport, on which there are several observations in the King's own hand. I will only quote one passage from it :  
 “ All these points of mercy and favor to Somerset  
 “ are to be understood with this limitation ; if he  
 “ do not, by his contemptuous and insolent carriage at the bar, make himself incapable and  
 “ unworthy of them.” The King's remark in

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 135.

the margin is in these words: " That danger is  
 " well to be foreseen, lest he upon the one part  
 " commit unpardonable errors; and I on the o-  
 " ther part seem to punish him in the spirit of  
 " revenge." Somerset was not to be tried for  
 any offence against the King; but for the barba-  
 rous murder of a private man and his friend.  
 What then means the contemptuous carriage that  
 is so much apprehended? What are the unpar-  
 donable errors it may lead him to commit? If  
 he reflected on a master, to whom he had been so  
 much obliged, only for giving him up to a fair  
 and equal trial, to a trial by many circumstances  
 rendered inevitable; that would, in the opinion  
 of all mankind, only aggravate his crime, and  
 furnish a new motive to that master for letting  
 the sentence pass upon him in all its rigor. After  
 these particulars, I may venture to mention a fact  
 related by Sir Anthony Weldon; who says, that  
 when the lieutenant of the tower, Sir George  
 More, came and told the Earl, he must prepare  
 for his trial on the morrow, he absolutely refused  
 to appear, unless they dragged him to it by vio-  
 lence; adding, that the King durst not bring him  
 to trial \*. Astonished at such rash and dangerous  
 expressions, the lieutenant, though it was then

\* Court of King James I. p. 106.

midnight, went and demanded an audience of the King, to inform him of what had passed. James, upon hearing his story, burst into a passion of tears, and intreated More to use his utmost skill upon his prisoner, and soothe him, by whatever means, into proper temper and submission. This More undertook to do, and by a stratagem effected it. Weldon affirms he had this story from the lieutenant's own mouth: and tho' he is a partial writer, and indulges himself in a humor of licentious scandal, the authentic vouchers I have produced render his anecdote not improbable. Other circumstances, mentioned by those who have professedly written of this reign, I therefor omit: and shall only add, that there is in the Cabala \* a letter to King James, from Somerset after his condemnation, of a very peculiar turn. He desires that his estate may be continued to him intire, in a stile rather of expostulation and demand than of humility and supplication: and through the affected obscurity of some expressions, one may discover, that there was an important secret in his keeping, of which the King dreaded a discovery. The issue was, that James continued to him a pension of four thousand pounds a year, as long as he lived.

\* Cabala, p. 204. Edit. 1692.



PRINCE Henry died in the year 1612, universally lamented. His excellent qualities had endeared him to the love and expectations of all England. Germanicus was not more the darling of the Roman people : and the untimely death of both those Princes was universally believed to have been procured by poison. He had expressed, on all occasions, an abhorrence of minions, and an utter contempt of Somerset : he had even declared a firm resolution, to humble both him and the family into which he was allied, if ever he came to reign. Whether the unaccountable transaction I have been relating has any reference to the death of this amiable Prince, or whether it does not point rather to an affair of a very different nature, the reader is left to determine.

VILLIERS, now without a rival in the King's affections, was every day receiving new proofs of his bounty : at the same time that he more than shared with him the exercise of his authority. In the course of a few years he was made Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber, Master of the Horse, Knight of the Garter, Earl, Marquis, and Duke of Buckingham, Chief Justice in Eyre of all the Forests, and Lord High Admiral of England. One of those prodigies of fortune, who rise now and then upon the world, as the vulgar imagine

of comets, at once to astonish and scourge it: a signal instance of the wantonness of sovereign power, and how far it may insult human kind in exalting and adorning, what it should neglect or condemn. He drew up after him an obscure kindred, numerous and indigent, bestowed on them places of trust and profit, married them into the noblest families, and graced them all with dignities, which were to be supported at the common expence of a whole people; to whom if any one of them was merely harmless, it was his utmost praise. After having red, not only what the enemies of this favorite have said against him, but all that his partizans have alleged on his behalf, I do not find, during the whole time of his influence under two reigns, an influence supreme and unbounded, that he ever projected one scheme for the benefit of his country, or ever executed one undertaking to it's honor: the only great criterion by which we ought to judge those men that administer the public. The breaking off the Spanish match at last was solely a sacrifice to his own vanity and resentment. On the caprice of this youth, however, the first and ablest men in the kingdom were to depend entirely, for their access at court, for their advancement, for any opportunity of being able to serve their country

and their Sovereign. Sir Francis Bacon was sensible of this, and courted his friendship with a particular application. But he must have felt all the servitude and disagreeableness of his situation\*, when, to be well with the King, he found it necessary to turn steward to the estate newly bestowed on this young man; to study the ways and means of improving his lands, and of rendering his places most profitable to him. It is true he found his account in this service; as it proved the surest means of his own preferment: but, to a great and worthy mind, preferment so meanly obtained is disgrace, only a little disguised and gilded over.

THE Lord Chancellor Egerton †, broken with age and infirmities, had often petitioned the King to be dismissed from his laborious employment. He was now seventy-seven years old, and had presided in the court of Chancery from the year 1596, with an unblemished reputation as a judge in private cases: but his public conduct had been always framed to the directions of the court with an obsequiousness, of dangerous example in one, who held so great and important a trust. To this high dignity Sir Francis Bacon privately aspired: and as it was the utmost scope of his am-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 163. † Cabala, p. 219.

bition, he had aimed all his endeavours in the King's service to merit it at his hands. He took care at the same time, to strengthen his pretensions by the credit of Buckingham. His ambition even made him descend to artifices, that are as common in courts, as they are mean and unwarrantable. He endeavoured to ruin in the King's good opinion such men as the voice of the public might probably design to the same office, and whom he therefor considered as his rivals. He was particularly jealous of Sir Edward Coke \*, and represented him as one who abounded in his own sense; one who affected popularity, and likely to court the good-will of the nation at the hazard of the prerogative. For himself, he placed his great merit in obedience and submission; in the interest he had among the Commons, and in being able to influence the lower House of Parliament: a service which he magnifies as more important in a Chancellor, than to judge in equity between party and party †. This opinion of his own popularity in the nation was not groundless. The Parliament that met in 1614, though extremely out of humor with the ministers in general, distinguished him by an uncommon mark of

\* Bacon Vol. IV. Letter 124.

† Petyt's Placeta Parliam. p. 174.

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favor and confidence. An objection having been started in the House of Commons, that a seat there was incompatible with the office of Attorney-General, which required his frequent attendance in the upper House: the Commons, from their particular regard for Sir Francis Bacon, and for that time only, over-ruled the objection; and he was accordingly allowed to take his place among them. If I observe further, that the King raised him to the dignity of a Privy Counsellor while he was still in this very office, it will be instead of many instances to shew, with what an addressful prudence he steered his course betwixt the court and the nation. He was thus favored by a Prince, who exacted from all his servants an implicit submission to his maxims of government: he gave no umbrage to a parliament whom these maxims had rendered jealous of the Prince, and of almost every man in his favor. But to return.

THESE insinuations had their desired effect. Upon the Chancellor's voluntary resignation of the seals, they were given to Sir Francis Bacon, with the title of the Lord Keeper, on the seventh of March 1617\*. To what interest he more particularly owed this promotion, we may learn

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 166.



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from his letter of acknowledgement, written that very day, to the Earl of Buckingham.

A FEW days after he had the seals delivered to him, the King went a progress into Scotland, carrying with him the favorite, who was likewise his prime minister: for to him all business, public or private, was addressed; and according to his fancy, for the most part determined. The great affair that employed the deliberations of his council about this time, and had a fatal influence on his conduct ever after, was the marriage of Prince Charles with the Infanta of Spain. In this resolution, though contrary to all the rules of good policy, he persisted for seven years together; against his own interest, against the universal voice of his people: only to procure the imaginary honor of an alliance with a crowned head: for all other alliances he thought below his dignity. Sir Francis Bacon \*, who saw through the vanity and danger of this intention, but who wanted resolution to be greatly honest, contented himself with insinuating softly, that it would be necessary to have the council unanimous in their suffrage on the occasion, whatever might be their private sentiments. This hint was not sufficient to open the King's eyes. On the contra-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 172.

By, he run blindfold into the snare that Gundamor was spreading for him. That famous statesman, as much by his buffooneries as by his talent for intrigue, had gained an absolute ascendant over James, leading him on from error to error: till in the end he made him sacrifice his conscience to the Pope, and his honor to the resentments of Philip, in the murder of his bravest subject Sir Walter Raleigh; the last terror of Spain, and the only surviving favorite of Queen Elizabeth. The Dutch too made advantage of the King's weakness and necessities. As the cautionary towns were still in the hands of the English, the States were under some apprehensions that the Spanish Ministry might prevail upon James \*, who could not possibly conceal his fondness for the match in treaty, to put those important places into their power. They knew at the same time that his treasury was exhausted, and that his courtiers were insatiable. To bring their purpose about, they ceased all at once to pay the English who garrisoned those places, as by their treaties they were obliged to do. Complaint being made of this to the Dutch Envoy at London, he insinuated, as from himself, to some of the Ministers, that if King James would desire it of the States;

\* Rapin.

they, out of consideration for him, would take up money at exorbitant interest, and in one payment discharge the whole debt due to the crown of England. This stratagem took effect. James wrote to the States : and the matter was immediately put into negotiation. The pensionary Barnevelt, whom they sent over, conducted the affair with so much address, that the King agreed to deliver up the cautionary towns for less than three millions of florins ; in lieu of eight millions they had engaged to pay Elizabeth, besides the interest that had been running on for eighteen years. Such are the events of this reign ; fit only to depress the writer, and distaste the reader.

DURING the King's absence in Scotland, there happened an affair, otherwise of small importance, but as it lets us into the true genius of those times, and serve to shew in what miserable subjection the favorite held all those who were in public employments. He was upon the point of ruining Sir Francis Bacon, the person he had just contributed to raise ; not for any error or negligence in their master's service, but merely for an opinion given in a thing that only regarded his own family. Indeed such was the levity, such the insolence of his power, that the capricious removal of men from their places became the prime di-

stinction of his thirteen years favor: which, as bishop Hacket \* observes, was like a sweeping flood, that at every spring-tide takes from one land, to cast what it has taken upon another. The affair was this. The year before, my Lord Coke had been removed from his place of Chief-Justice and disgraced: the court having found him, in several instances, no friend to arbitrary will and pleasure, or to the prerogative, as it was called; but resolutely bent to maintain the integrity and honor of his post. One Peacham had been accused of inserting in a sermon several passages accounted treasonable, for it seems they reflected on the ministry; but in a sermon never preached, nor ever intended to be made public. The King, who was beyond measure jealous on this head, fearing the man might either be acquitted on his trial, or not condemned to a capital punishment, had ordered his Attorney-General Bacon † to sound the Judges before-hand, and gather their opinions, secretly and apart. My Lord Coke obstinately refused to declare his; looking on this auricular taking of opinions, for so he named it, as not according to the customs of the realm, but new and of pernicious tendency.

\* Life of Archbishop Williams, part 2. p. 19.

† Vol. IV. Letter 112.

About the same time he had determined a cause at common law. The plaintiff \*, who thought himself injured, would not abide by his decision, but applied to Chancery for relief: where the defendant refused to appear, disclaiming the authority of that court; in which he was supported by the Chief-Justice, who threatened the Chancellor with a premunire, grounded on a statute made 27th Edward III. for his invading the limits of his jurisdiction. The King, who thought his prerogative struck at anew in this attack on the court of his absolute power, as Bacon files it, had the matter examined before the Council: who condemned the Chief-Justice for what he had done, and obliged him to make a submission on his knees. But what completed the distaste taken at him, was his behaviour in a cause of the Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, to whom the King had granted a vacant church in Commendam. Serjeant Chiborne †, who was council against the Bishop, in arguing the case had maintained several positions, reckoned prejudicial and derogatory to the King's supreme and imperial power, which was affirmed to be distinct from, and of a higher nature than his ordinary authority. Informed of this, James, by his Attorney-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 125, 142. † Letter 142, 145.



General Bacon, ordered the Judges to stay further proceeding in that business, till they had consulted with him. The Judges assembled, and unanimously agreed, that they could not obey this order; that the letter they had received was contrary to law; that, by their oath and the duty of their places, they were not to delay justice; that they had therefor proceeded in the cause at the time fixed: and of this they certified the King in a writing under all their hands. Upon this remonstrance, he writ them an angry letter, and peremptorily commanded them to stay all proceedings, till his return to London. They were then summoned before the Council, and sharply reprimanded for suffering the popular lawyers to question his prerogative; which was represented as sacred and transcendent, not to be handled or mentioned in vulgar argument. At last raising his voice, to frighten them into submission, he put this question to them severally: "if, at any time, in a case depending before the Judges, he conceived it to concern him either in profit or power, and thereupon required to consult with them, and that they should stay proceedings in the mean time: whether they ought not to stay them accordingly?" They all, the Chief Justice only excepted, acknowledged it

their duty to do so \*. His answer deserves to be for ever remembered : " That when such a case " happened, he would do that which should be " fit for a Judge to do."

YET this great Lawyer, who had the honest courage to resist the King to his face, wanted that independence of mind which alone enables a man to bear solitude, and an acquaintance with himself. His disgrace, which reflected more honor on him than all his preferments, he knew not how to support : and therefor soon after sued to be reinstated in the King's favor. To recover it, he meanly courted the favorite with an offer, which he would not hear of when it was formerly made to him. While in power, he refused to give his daughter in marriage to Sir John Villierst, not without marks of disrespect. He now submissively entreated the same person to honor him with his alliance : and employed Secretary Winwood to inform the Earl of Buckingham of his extreme concern for what had passed with regard to the Earl's brother ; that he now passionately wished the treaty might be renewed and accomplished : adding, that they should make their own terms of settlement, if his proposal was accepted. As the young lady was not only a celebrated beau-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 145. † Letter 177. 178.

ty, but a great fortune, the person most interested made no difficulty to close with this proposal: and his mother recommended it to her second son with warmth. This alarmed the Lord-Keeper Bacon. Ever jealous of Coke's reputation, he dreaded his alliance with so powerful a family. His imagination suggested to him all the danger that threatened his present and future fortunes from this union: and he could not forget that he had lately treated his antagonist with a freedom that rather insulted than admonished him \*. These apprehensions made him cast about how to defeat the intended match, by raising such objections to it as might touch the King and his favorite in point of public honor and advantage. His letters to both, on that occasion, are written with the perplexity of a man who fears something he is unwilling to own; which yet his prudence passes over with a seeming unconcern, to enlarge only upon considerations that regard those whom he would be thought to serve. But this management proved ineffectual. It was resented by the Earl of Buckingham, and checked by a rough answer from the King. The Lady Compton too, informed of the part he was acting, gave a loose to her tongue, and railed at him with a bitterness

\* Letter 139. to Lord Coke.

natural to women when they are thwarted in any favorite pursuit of interest or passion. Having thus, to prevent a distant and uncertain danger, involved himself in one that was real and immediate, he made no scruple to change sides at once: to go directly against his former opinions; and to offer unasked his interest in the young Lady's Mother for promoting the match, he had been laboring to disappoint \*. On such trivial accidents do the fortunes of ministers depend: and to such little and shameful arts is ambition often obliged to stoop. Nor even thus did he presently regain his credit with Buckingham. The family continued to load him with reproaches: and he remained long under that agony of heart which an aspiring man must feel, when his power and dignity are at the mercy of a King's minion, young, and giddy with his elevation, and who thinks himself offended. They were however reconciled at last; and their friendship, if obsequiousness in one to all the humours of the other deserves the name of friendship, continued without interruption for some years: while Buckingham went on daily to place and displace the great officers of the crown, as wantonness of fancy, or anger, or interest led him; to recommend or dis-

\* Letter 181.

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countenance every private person who had a suit depending in any court, just as he was influenced; to authorize and protect every illegal project, that could serve most speedily to enrich himself or his kindred. In a word, he became formidable even to the master who had raised him from the dust, and who should have still awed him by his authority: and this amidst the dissipation of a life, given up to idle amusements, or sully'd with criminal pleasures.

IN the beginning of 1619, Sir Francis Bacon was created Lord High Chancellor of England, and shortly after Baron of Verulam; which title he exchanged, the year following, for that of Viscount St. Alban. Such events in his life as these may be pass'd over slightly: he was so great a man, that external honors could add no lustre to his name. Indeed had they been the immediate reward of those nobler services he had done, and was still meditating to do his country, they might deserve more particular notice, for the sake of him who bestow'd them.

NEITHER the weight and variety of business, nor the pomps of a Court, could divert his attention from the study of philosophy. Those were his avocations and encumbrances: this was his beloved employment, and almost the only plea-



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ture in which he indulged his freer and better hours. He gave to the public in 1620, his *Novum Organon*, as a second part to his grand instauration of the sciences: a work that for twelve years together he had been methodizing, altering, polishing; till he had labored the whole into a series of aphorisms, as it now appears. Of all his writings this seems to have undergone the strictest revision, and to be finished with the severest judgment. Indeed the form into which it is cast admits of nothing foreign, of nothing merely ornamental. The lights and embellishments of imagination, the grace and harmony of style, are rejected here, as beauties either superfluous, or of an inferior nature. The Author has besides made use of several terms in a new and particular sense, which may have discouraged some readers; as it has made others imagine them equally unintelligible with the horrors of a vacuum, the quiddities, and substantial forms, of the philosophy which he attempted to discredit: and therefor, of all his writings it has been the least read, or understood. It was intended as a more useful, a more extensive logic than the world had yet been acquainted with. An art not conversant about syllogisms, and modes of argumentation, that may be serviceable some-

times in arranging truths already known, or in detecting fallacies that lie concealed among our own reasonings, and those of other men: but an art inventive of arts; productive of new discoveries, real, important, and of general use to human life. This he proposed, by turning our attention from notions to things; from those subtle and frivolous speculations that dazzle, not enlighten the understanding, to a sober and sensible investigation of the laws and powers of nature, in a way becoming sages who make truth and information the sole aim of their enquiries. In order to this, his first endeavour was to weed out of the mind such errors as naturally grow in it, or have been planted there by education, and cherished by the influence of men whose writings had long claimed a right of prescription to rule and mislead mankind. To a mind thus prepared for instruction, he proposes the second scientific part of his scheme, the true method of interpreting nature, by fact and observation; by sound and genuine Induction, widely differing from that puerile art which till then had solely prevailed in philosophy. His requires a sufficient, an accurate collection of instances, gathered with sagacity and recorded with impartial plainness, on both sides of the question: from which, after viewing

them in all possible lights, to be sure that no contradictory instances can be brought, some portion of useful truth, leading on to further discoveries, may be at last fairly deduced. In this way, experiments and reasonings grow up together, to support and illustrate each other mutually, in every part of science.

As we are now approaching towards the most memorable event of our Author's public life, which ended in a melancholy reverse of his fortune and honor, it will be necessary to trace, step by step, the causes that produced it: especially as the affair has not been hitherto considered in the point of view that renders it most interesting and instructive. It will, I believe, appear with evidence, that, whatever his crimes might be, he was sacrificed to the safety of another, far more criminal than himself: and that this was the act of an ill-judging master, with whom it was a greater merit to be amusing in any degree, than to be serviceable in the greatest.

AMONG the weaknesses of King James, his vanity was the most pernicious, to his own family, and to the nation in general. He placed an infinite value on certain chimerical advantages that met in his person; on that inherent right by which he pretended the crown of England was devolved

to him ; on his so long acquaintance with the prime mysteries of government, and on his uncommon accomplishments in learning. His favorite maxim was, that he who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign : but he seems not to have heard of a second maxim, without which the first cannot be successful, even for a time ; to conceal every appearance of cunning, and to deceive under the mask of candor and good faith. He, on the contrary, shewed his whole game at once, to his own subjects and to foreigners alike : so that in his attempts upon the former, in his negotiations with the latter, this Solomon was the only dupe. A great share of learning he certainly had, but of learning that a King ought not to be acquainted with ; the very refuse of the schools, which served for little else but to furnish him with an impertinent fluency, on every subject : and he indulged himself in the sovereign pedantry of setting it to show, on every occasion. Upon all these heads, he was extolled without measure by the most pestilent of flatterers, grave and reverend ecclesiastics : for which, and because they encouraged him in an unprincely application of his talent, he, on many occasions, made his power the mean instrument to gratify their passions and lust of dominion. They, in

return, found out for him a title antecedent and superior to human laws, even a divine right of being weak or wicked, without controul. And this doctrine, horrible as it is, they dared to derive from scripture: where if it could be found, which to affirm were blasphemy, it would be the triumph of infidelity, and demonstration that those sacred writings were inspired, not by God, but by some Being, his opposite, and the enemy of all goodness. This doctrine, meeting with his own perverted habits of thinking, made King James look upon his subjects as slaves; upon his parliament as usurpers of a power, to which they had no right, or at best a precarious one: and he had now, for seven years together, affected to govern without them; to set up an interest separate from that of his people, and to supply his wants by all ways and means, but such as the constitution prescribed. These methods were suggested to him by the worst enemies of the commonwealth, the tribe of projectors and monopolists\*: miscreants who sheltered themselves under the name and influence of Buckingham, and who repaid his protection extravagantly, at the expence of a people whom they were grinding and devouring. His mother too, now created a Countess in her own

\* Hacket p. 50.



right, a woman born for mischief, of a meddling spirit and insatiably greedy, was deep in the guilt of these transactions; forwarding every bad project that brought her in money; and by the mighty power she had over her son, succeeding in every scandalous job she undertook. Under an administration like this, when England was in effect governed by a dissolute youth, himself in the hands of an intriguing, rapacious woman, it cannot be surprizing that the people were vexed and plundered by illegal patents, by monopolies, by other mischievous projects calculated to enrich a few, and to ruin thousands. To all these patents, however procured, the Lord Chancellor had readily, almost implicitly, affixed the seal, as the mere creature of Buckingham. Or if he ever ventured to insinuate that any of them were contrary to law, his remonstrance was too fearful and unsupported to produce any effect. This is the great stain on his character; that he deserted, or neglected, the post of honor where providence had placed him, on the frontier, if I may so speak, betwixt Prerogative and Liberty: that, if he did not encourage, he at least connived at, the invasions that were every day making into the latter. Yet this was against his inclination, as well as against his better sense of

things: for as he knew well that his master's true interest lay in a good understanding with his people, he had often advised him to call frequent parliaments, and to throw himself on the affections of the nation for the support of his government. Though such advice was repugnant to all the maxims by which that monarch wished to establish his power; though he had resolved to lay parliaments aside for ever, as daring encroachers upon his prerogative, who made themselves greater and their prince less than became either: yet he was now prevailed upon, to meet the two houses once more. Indeed the exigency of his affairs rendered it necessary. His subjects, it is true, were harassed and pillaged; but he was still in extreme want of money: those wretches, to whom he delegated his authority, leaving to him little else besides the public hatred, occasioned by their rapines committed in his name. Add to this, that the juncture appeared favorable for obtaining large supplies from the Commons. As the whole body of the nation expressed an uncommon zeal for recovering the Palatinate to his unfortunate son-in-law, he had reason to expect, that on the assurance of his entering heartily into a war, they would vote him considerable aids of money; which he might afterwards divert, as he actually did.

to other purposes that better suited his genius and notions.

A PARLIAMENT was accordingly summoned: and it met on the 20th of January, 1621. The King was not wholly mistaken in his conjecture; for the Commons immediately voted him two entire subsidies: but went at the same time upon a strict enquiry into those arbitrary impositions that, in a period of seven years, were become insupportable to the people. Among the monopolies, in particular, there were three of flagrant injustice and oppression. Certain persons had obtained patents from the King, which empowered them to set up an annual fine on such as kept inns, or ale-houses, throughout England. Without a licence from the patentees, no man could hold either: and whoever would not readily pay the sum, at which these low instruments of power thought fit to excise him, was sure of being harassed and plundered, or thrown into a jail. This proved a fruitful source of vexations, and fell heavy on the poorer sort. The third was yet more enormous; a patent for the sole making and vending of gold and silver lace, which had been granted to two infamous tools of the favorite, Mompeffon and Michel; the Dudley and Empson of that age. The first a man of fortune, whose

sole ambition was to make himself considered, though but by his crimes: the other an obscure Justice of the peace, who, in a remote quarter of the town, picked up a sordid maintenance from the stews. They had, it seems, shamefully abused the power their exclusive patent gave them, by putting off, for true, great quantities of counterfeit lace, wrought up and embased with copper, or other materials of a poisonous nature\*: and whoever presumed to make or sell any other was cruelly punished, by fine and imprisonment†. In these outrages they were the more daring, because Sir Edward Villiers, half-brother to the Favorite, was associated into their patent, though not named it. These, with many other grievances, were laid open in parliament, and severely censured. But the Commons did not stop here. They were for carrying their search up to the prime cause of all grievances, in order to discover by whose influence the several patents had been procured, and how they had passed the seals. Complaints were brought into the house, about the same time, of corrupt practices even in the High Court of Equity. This alarmed the King for his Chancellor, and still more for his Minion; as private intimations had been sent to Bucking-

\* Wilson.

† Hacket, p. 49.

ham, of a severe scrutiny that was making into all his management, and of frequent meetings that were held, with great secrecy, by certain members of the lower house \*: in order to fix on him the guilt of whatever was most unjustifiable and oppressive. Buckingham's creatures, anxious and alarmed at this intelligence, persuaded him, that he could secure impunity to himself and them, only by bringing his master forthwith to dissolve the parliament: and James had certainly been frightened into that rash and hazardous step, but for the sober remonstrances of Williams dean of Westminster. That politic courtier advised him to cancel at once, by proclamation, all monopolies and vexatious grants; to sacrifice inferior criminals to the public resentment: and to soothe the parliament with an assurance that this reformation was first proposed by his favorite, on finding how much he had been abused by designing and knavish projectors. This counsel the King resolved to follow: but it did not wholly free him from the perplexity he was under. The Chancellor, whom his interest led him to preserve, was openly accused of corruption: the Favorite, whom his tenderness could not resign, was secretly, and therefor more dangerously attacked;

\* Cabala, Letter 2.



as the encourager, if not the author, of whatever was deemed most illegal and oppressive. To save both, at this juncture, would be impossible \* : and he found he must either part with the Object of his inclinations, or with the Oracle of his counsels. How such a prince would determine, is easy to guess. His passion prevailed over his reason : and my Lord St. Alban was made the scape-goat of Buckingham. He was even obliged to abandon his defence. As he had gained universal esteem by his learning ; and as his eloquence was equal to his parts, superior and commanding, the King would not hazard his appearing before the Lords to plead his own cause. In the course of such an enquiry, he might have diverted the public odium from himself, by laying open the long series of bad administration to which he had been privy ; the many illegal patents he had been compelled to pass : and all this came full home to Buckingham, the great object of national vengeance. The faults too, imputed to himself, he might have extenuated so far as to procure a great mitigation of the censure, that must otherwise fall upon him in it's utmost rigor. All this he foresaw and felt ; but the King absolutely commanded him not to be present at his trial : pro-

\* Bushel's Abridg. Post. p. 2, 3.

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misg, on his royal word, to screen him in the last determination ; or if that could not be, to reward him afterwards with ample retribution of protection and favor. He obeyed, and was undone.

ON the twelfth of March \*, a committee for inspecting into the abuses of the courts of Justice was appointed by the Commons. Some days after, Sir Robert Philips, a gentleman eminent for public spirit and humanity, reported from thence to the house, that complaints had been brought before them, by two persons, against the Lord Chancellor, for bribery and corruption. This report he made not only without bitterness, but in terms of great regard and tenderness for the Accused ; moving that the business might be presented to the Peers, singly and without exaggeration. At a conference, on the nineteenth, between certain members of both houses, the Lords agreed to take the matter into their speedy consideration. As soon as this affair was become the public talk, a new croud of accusers appeared, and charged home the unhappy Chancellor with other and flagrant instances of bribery ; such persons especially as had courted him with presents, and afterwards received a judgement un-

\* State Tryals, Vol. I. p. 253, &c.

favorable to their expectations: animated more by that disappointment, than by the iniquity of his decisions \*; for it does not appear that any of his decrees were ever reversed. He was all this while confined to his house by an indisposition, real or pretended: but, if his body was in health, what must have been the condition of his mind, in this interval of suspense and anxiety? a great mind, already self-convicted, yet exquisitely sensible to good fame, which it has long enjoyed, and is upon the point of losing for ever. His reflections, whether he looked back on the past, or forward to the prospect before him, must have been terrible: as they were at the same time inflamed by peculiar circumstances of shame and confusion; that he was now, at the age of sixty-one, falling a victim to the rapine and insolence of his domestics, which he had weakly connived at, rather than to any faults of his own.

On the twenty-sixth day of March, the King came to the house of Peers; and, in expressions of studied popularity, owned the errors of his government, exclaimed against the patents complained of, frankly gave up to justice the lesser criminals concerned in them: and all for the sake

\* Rushworth's Coll. v. 1.

## CHANCELLOR BACON. 83

of his Favorite, whom in the end he endeavoured to screen by the poorest reasons imaginable. Indeed, no good reasons could be alleged in defence of him, who was the greatest criminal; and without whose concurrence the wretches in question could not have been guilty. The Lords were not imposed upon by this speech: however, thinking it sufficient to have reduced their sovereign to the necessity of an apology, they feigned to be of his opinion. Thus, Buckingham escaped for the present; to accumulate new guilt, and to fall at last, ignobly, by a private hand: after he had been devoted, by the curses of a whole people, and more solemnly still by the denunciations of their representatives.

AFTER a recess of three weeks, the House met again: but the weight of their indignation fell singly, and therefor without mercy, on the Chancellor. They were not satisfied with his letter of general confession, though delivered to them by the Prince of Wales; in which he renounced all justification of himself, and sued for no other favor "but that his penitent submission might be his sentence, and the lose of the seals his punishment." He was obliged to put in a particular answer to every point of his accusation: which he did on the first of May, 1621;

acknowledging in the most explicate words, the corruption charged upon him in twenty-eight several articles, and throwing his cause entirely on the compassion of his Judges. His sentence was, "to undergo a fine of forty thousand pounds: "to be imprisoned in the Tower during the "King's pleasure; to be for ever incapable of "any office, place, or employment in the commonwealth; and never to sit again in parliament, or come within the verge of the court." Thus he lost the great privilege of his peerage: a severity unusual, except in cases of treason and attainder.

THE last article of his charge furnishes matter for much reflection. It alleges, "that he had "given way to great exactions in his servants, "both in respect of private seals, and otherwise "for sealing injunctions\*." This indulgence to his domestics, which was certainly extreme, has been generally, and I believe truly, reckoned the principal cause of those irregularities that drew on his disgrace. Liberal in his own temper, or rather profuse beyond the condition of a man who means to preserve his integrity, he allowed his family in every kind of extravagance: and as many of his retinue were young, dissipated, giddy

\* Wilson. Bushel's Abridg. Post. p. 2.



## CHANCELLOR BACON. 85

in the pursuit of pleasure, they squandered without measure, where they were indulged without controul \*. Whether he did not discover this error till it was too late, or whether a soul like his, lost in the greatness and immensity of it's own views, could not attend to that detail of little and disagreeable-particulars which yet œconomy requires; however that was, to support his ordinary train of living, he fell into corruption himself, and connived at it in his dependents. Thus we may behold him, a memorable example of all that is great and exalted, and of all that is little and low, in man. Such inconsistencies in our human nature cannot but alarm and terrify even those who are most confirmed in a habit of virtue.

AFTER a short confinement in the Tower, the King restored him to his liberty, and forgave the fine in which the Parliament had amerced him. As this fine was very considerable, he managed so as to have it assigned over to some of his friends, under the notion of being his creditors †: And we find Williams, his successor in the seals, complaining heavily of this stratagem;

\* One day, during his trial, as he was passing through a room where several of his domestics were sitting; upon their getting up to salute him, Sit down my Masters, he cried; your rise hath been my fall.

† Cabala, p. 263. Edit. I. 1691.

as if he thereby intended to defraud those persons to whom he was really in debt, who were many, and in danger of being ruined by his fall. But I am inclined to hope, that he made use of this artifice with a more innocent view; namely to procure himself a short respite from their importunity, till he could settle his private affairs, extremely perplexed by former ill management, and now by the loss of his employment rendered desperate. That I may not be obliged to mention any more an affair, alike ungrateful to the reader and writer, I will observe here, that about three years after this, he petitioned King James for a total remission of his censure \*: to the end that "this blot of ignominy might be removed from him, and from his memory with posterity †". What lay in a King's power, James readily granted, a full and entire pardon of his whole sentence ‡. Posterity likewise, to which he appealed, has seemed unwilling to remember that he ever offended: and those who record his failings, like those who have made observations on the spots in the sun, neither pretend to diminish his real brightness in himself, nor deny his universal influence on the world of learning ||. Thus he

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 291. † Cabala, p. 249.

‡ Accordingly he was summoned to the first Parliament of King Charles.

|| The reader sees here how severely the crime of receiving

withdrew from the glare of a public station into the shade of retirement and studious leisure †; often lamenting, that ambition and false glory had so long diverted him from the noblest as well as

presents, from suitors in the court of Chancery, was punished in the person of this Chancellor. It was however a practice neither uncommon among his predecessors in that court; nor, I believe, imputed to them for unrighteousness. This will appear plainly by the curious anecdote that follows; which I myself copied from the original manuscript, in the possession of Henry Wise Esq; of Hampton-Court.

Declarant etiam executores predicti quod ipsi ad speciale rogatum prædicti domini Henrico filii dicti Domini nuper Comitis, quod erat eis ad preceptum, DEDERUNT DOMINO CANCELARIO ANGLIÆ, \* *7 shaving bacyn argenti*, quæ erat predicti domini patris sui, viz. AD EXCITANDUM DICTUM DOMINUM CANCELLARIUM *fore binevolum et beneficientem materiis dicti Domini Henrici in curiis Domini regis pendentibus.* pretium VIII *l.*

Declarant etiam executores predicti quod ipsi DEDERUNT DOMINO ARCHI. CANTUARIE CANCELARIO ANGLIÆ, \* *7 salt Salar auri* ad similitudinem Cervi jacentis facti, quod erat dicti domini nuper comitis, appretiatum ad 40 *l.* 16 *s.* 8 *d.* *ad intentionem ut IPSE DOM. ARCHI. ET CANC. suum bonum Dominium et auxilium dictis executoribus favorabiliter ostenderet et faceret in certis materiis que versus eosdem executores ad grave prejudicium et impedimentum debite executionis testamenti et ultime voluntatis dicti Domini nuper Comitis subtiliter movebantur: ad valentiam sicut predictur.*

This paper is called,

Declaracio Thome Huggeford, Nicoli Rody et Willi. Berhswel presbyter. These were executors and feoffees of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick: and this declaration was made in the 21 year of Henry 6th; to account for certain plate, jewels, and so forth, which had come into their hands as his executors.

† Bussel's Abridg. Post. p. 3.

the most useful employments of a reasonable being: mortified, no doubt, into these sentiments by a severe conviction, in his own person, of the instability and emptiness of all human grandeur.

HITHERTO, we have followed him through the bustle and obliquity of business. We shall find him henceforth in a more pleasing, though a less conspicuous, situation: freed from the servitude of a court; from an intolerable attendance there, on the vices and follies of men every way his inferiors, (for in this reign no one could rise to power on more honorable terms :) in a condition now to pursue the native bent of his genius; to live to himself, and for the advantage, not of one age, or one people only, but of all mankind, and all times to come.

THE first considerable work he engaged in, after his retirement, was the history of Henry VII. which he undertook at the desire of King James, and published in the year 1622. Whatever some writers may have insinuated of his melancholy and dejection, we find every where, in this performance, evident traces of a spirit unbroken by age, and unsubdued by misfortunes. It has been highly applauded, and as much condemned: a proof that it has more than common merit. And we may venture to affirm that whatever it's

faults are, they arise from no want of vigor in the understanding, or of warmth in the imagination, of the writer. King James affected to consider his great grandfather Henry as a perfect model for the imitation of other Monarchs: and as his was the reign of flattery, this quickly grew to be the prevalent and fashionable opinion at court. Though in truth, that Prince's character was, in every part of it, unamiable; and his conduct, on many occasions, weak or wicked. If my Lord Bacon has not wholly escaped the infection of his age; if he has here and there attempted to brighten the imperfections, and throw in shades the bad features of the original he was drawing; yet, through these softenings, we can easily see this King as he was, and in all his genuine deformity. Suspicion and avarice, his own historian acknowledges, were the chief ingredients in his composition: and therefor his politics, both at home and abroad, were narrow, selfish, and false. Void of all great and extensive prudence, he endeavoured to supply that want by temporary shifts, and the little expedients of cunning. By these he commonly had the luck to extricate himself out of difficulties, which a wiser man would have timely foreseen, and a better man



have wholly prevented \*. But as his genius was unfociable and solitary, the darkness in his temper passed on mankind for depth and sagacity in his understanding †. His avarice too was sordid and shameless. Nothing seemed mean, nothing unjust in his eyes, that could fill his coffers : and merely to fill them, for of wealth he had no enjoyment, he descended to arts of rapine no less scandalous than they were oppressive.

I HAVE acknowledged that my Lord Bacon's history has been taxed of partiality, and I will not dissemble that his stile has been objected to, as full of affectation, full of false eloquence. But that was the vice, not of the man, but of the times he lived in : and particularly of a court that, after the Sovereign's example, delighted in the tinsel of wit and writing, in the poor ingenuity of punning and quibbling.

HIS Essays have, of all his works, been most current, and are still very justly esteemed. Towards the close of his life he greatly enlarged them both in number and weight ; and published them anew, not only in english, but in a more universal language, which, he imagined, may preserve them as long as books shall last. As they are intended not to amuse but to instruct ; as they are

\* Bacon, Vol. III. p. 400. † P. 404.

neither a satire on human nature, nor the school of scepticism; Monsieur de Voltaire observes \*, that they have been less popular than the Maxims of Rochefoucault, or the Essays of Montagne. A remark that does my Lord Bacon honor; who was too great a man to court a reputation from the multitude, by sacrificing to that malignity, or indulging that curious extravagance, which too many readers, I am afraid, expect to find gratified, even in writings of a moral kind.

OF the other works which he composed in this last scene of his life, I forbear to make any mention here: they will be all enumerated in another place. Let me only observe, that nothing can give a more exalted idea of the fruitfulness and vigor of his genius than the number and nature of those writings. Under the discouragement of a public censure, broken in his health, broken in his fortunes, he enjoyed his retirement not above five years: a little portion of time! yet he found means to crowd into it, what might have been the whole business, and the glory too, of a long and fortunate life. Some of his former pieces he methodized and enriched: several new ones he composed, no less considerable for the greatness and variety of the arguments he treated, than for his

\* Lettres sur les Anglois, p. 88.

manner of treating them. Nor are they works of mere erudition and labor, that require little else but strength of constitution and obstinate application: they are original efforts of genius and reflection, on subjects either new, or handled in a manner that makes them so. His notions he drew from his own fund: and they were solid, comprehensive, systematical; the disposition of his whole plan throwing light and grace on all the particular parts. In considering every subject, he seems to have placed himself in a point of view so advantageous and elevated, that he could from thence discover a whole country round him, and mark out the several spots of it, distinctly and with ease. These characters are equally due to the works in which he made some progress, and to those he could only attempt.

His supposed poverty has been much insisted on\*, not only by our own writers, but by foreigners. Some of the former have asserted, that he languished out a solitary being in obscurity and indigence: and among the latter, Le Clerc, who was led into the same notion by a passage in one of Howel's letters, has animadverted with an honest indignation on the meaness of that Prince, who could leave such a man as he was, to struggle,

\* Wilson.

in his declining age, both with penury and affliction. I believe the matter has been exaggerated. Perhaps he did not enjoy affluence, or entire ease of fortune: but his ordinary income must have placed him above fordid want and anxiety. Dr. Rawley, who lived long in his family, affirms that the King had given him, out of the Broad Seal and Alienation Office, to the value of eighteen hundred pounds a year; which, with his own lands amounting to a third part more, he retained to his death. But then, he had treasured up nothing in his prosperous condition against the day of adversity: and his pension was not only precarious, but ill-paid, by a King, who, instead of husbanding his revenues for great or good purposes, was daily lavishing them away, in fruitless negotiations, or on the least deserving of his subjects. Add to these, that my Lord Bacon lay all this time under the incumbrance of a vast debt: and that he had doubtless expended very considerable sums in procuring or making experiments. Even those, whom we see close and sparing on every other occasion, are yet profuse in gratifying a favorite passion. Such were the causes of that distress and of those difficulties into which he was often plunged. That they were

many and great, we can entertain no doubt \*. It is but too strongly confirmed to us by some unusual expressions in his letters to King James ; where we find him pouring out his heart in complaints and supplications of such a strain †, as every one who reveres his memory will wish he had never uttered. Those who insist on the meanness, those who plead for the dignity, of human nature, may, in this one man, find abundant matter to support their several opinions. But, let us draw a veil over imperfections, and at the same time acknowledge, that a very ordinary penetration may serve to discover remarkable blemishes and failings in the most comprehensive minds, in the greatest characters, that ever adorned mortality.

KING James died in 1625; after an inglorious and a fatal reign of three and twenty years: despised by foreigners, despised and hated by his own subjects. The mischievous notions he broached, the perverse conduct he held, gave rise to those divisions that quickly after involved his kingdom in all the guilt and misery of a civil war: that shook the British constitution to it's foundations, and in the end over-turned it.

\* It appears by a letter of Buckingham to him, that he asked for the Provostship of Eaton College, and was refused it.

† Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 271.



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His unfortunate Chancellor survived him something above a year. The multiplicity of business and study in which he had been long engaged, but above all the anguish of mind he secretly labored under, had undermined and broken into his health. After having been for some time infirm and declining, he owed his death at last to an excess, not unbecoming a philosopher; in pursuing, with more application than his strength could bear, certain experiments touching the conservation of bodies. He was so suddenly struck in his head and stomach, that he found himself obliged to retire into the Earl of Arundel's house at Highgate, near which he then happened to be. There he sickened of a fever, attended with a defluxion on his breast: and, after a week's illness, expired, on the ninth of April \*, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. How he bore this indisposition, or what discourses he held at the nearer approaches of death, no account is to be found; an omission which every reader must feel and regret: as nothing can awaken the attention, nothing affect the heart of man more strongly than the behavior of eminent personages in their last moments; in that only scene of life wherein we are all sure, later or sooner, to resemble them. There remains

\* 1626.

only a letter\*, the last he ever wrote, addressed to that nobleman under whose roof he died: in which he compares himself to a celebrated philosopher of antiquity, Pliny the elder; who lost his life by enquiring, with too dangerous a curiosity, into the first great eruption of Vesuvius.

THUS lived, and died the Lord Chancellor Bacon †.

HE was buried privately in St. Michael's church near St. Albans. The spot that contains his re-

\* Bacon, Vol. IV. Letter 297.

† He continued single till after forty, and then took to wife a daughter of Alderman Barnham of London, with whom he received a plentiful fortune, but had by her no children: and she out-lived him upwards of twenty years. Such readers, as have any curiosity to know what regimen he observed, may take the following account of it in the words of his Chaplain. "His diet was rather plentiful and liberal than restrained. In his younger years he was much given to the finer and lighter sorts of meats: but afterwards he preferred the stronger, such as the shambles afforded; as those which bred the more firm and substantial juices, and less dissipable. He did not, you may be sure, neglect that himself, which he so much extolled to others in his writings, the frequent use of nitre; whereof he took the quantity of about three grains in thin warm broth every morning, for thirty years together. His ordinary physic was a maceration of rhubarb, infused into a draught of white-wine and beer mingled together for the space of half an hour, once in six or seven days, immediately before his meal, whether dinner or supper; that it might dry the body less. His receipt for the gout, which constantly gave him ease within two hours, is set down in the end of the Natural History." Vol. III. p.

# CHANCELLOR BACON. 97

mains lay obscure and undistinguished, till the gratitude of a private man \*, formerly his servant, erected a monument to his name and memory. In another country, in a better age, his monument would have stood a public proof in what veneration the whole society held a citizen, whose genius did them honor, and whose writings will instruct their latest posterity.

ONE passage in his will is remarkable. After bequeathing his soul and body in the usual form, he adds, " my name and memory I leave to foreign nations ; and to mine own countrymen, after some time be passed over †." As to the former, he was, even in his life time, looked upon with admiration by the most eminent men that France and Italy could then boast of: and by some of them visited, as One whose talents were an ornament, not only to his age, but to human nature itself. When the Marquis D'Effiat brought into England the Princess Henrietta-Maria, wife to Charles the First, he paid a visit to my Lord Bacon ‡; who, being then sick in bed, received him with the curtains drawn. " You resemble the angels, said that minister to him: we hear those beings continually talked

\* Sir Thomas Meautys. † Baconiana, p. 203.

‡ Voltaire, *Lettres sur les Anglois*, p. 82.

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“ of, we believe them superior to mankind, and  
“ we never have the consolation to see them.”

Among his countrymen, the names, alone, of those who have adopted his notions, and proceeded on his plan, are his highest encomium. To pass over a long line of philosophers, all illustrious; he reckons in the list of his followers a Boyle, a Locke, a Newton himself.

ONE singularity there was in his temperament, not easily to be accounted for \*: in every eclipse of the moon, whether he observed it or not, he was certainly seized with a sudden fit of fainting; which left him, without any remaining weakness, as soon as the eclipse ended. He was of a middling stature †; his forehead spacious and open, early impressed with the marks of age; his eye lively and penetrating; his whole appearance venerably pleasing; so that the beholder was insensibly drawn to love, before he knew how much reason there was to admire him. In this respect we may apply to Bacon what Tacitus finely observes of his father-in-law, Agricola: ‘ a good man you would readily have judged him to be, and have been pleased to find him a great man.’

THOSE talents that commonly appear single in others, and they too men of reputation, shone

\* Rawley's Life of Bacon. † Evelyn of Medals, p. 340.

# CHANCELLOR BACON. 99

forth in him united and eminent. All his contemporaries, even those who hated the Courtier, stand up and bear witness together to the superior abilities of the Writer and Pleader, of the Philosopher and Companion \*. In conversation, he could assume the most differing characters, and speak the language proper to each, with a facility that was perfectly natural; or the dexterity of the habit concealed every appearance of art: a happy versatility of genius, which all men wish to arrive at, and one or two, once in an age, are seen to possess. In public, he commanded the attention of his hearers, and had their affections wholly in his power. As he accompanied what he spoke with all the expression and grace of action, his pleadings, that are now perhaps read without emotion, never failed to awaken in his audience the several passions he intended they should feel. This is not a picture of him drawn from fancy; it is copied, and that too but in miniature, after another taken by One who knew him well †; a good judge of merit, and seldom known to err, at least in heightening a favorable likeness. As a philosopher, it is scarce hyperbolical to say of him, in Mr. Addison's words, that he had the

\* Osborn's Advice to a son.

† B. Johnson, in his discoveries.



found, distinct, comprehensive knowlege of Aristotle, with all the beautiful lights, graces, and embellishments of Cicero. To this commendation of his talents, the Learned throughout Europe have given their common sanction, and own him for the father of the only valuable philosophy, that of fact and observation.

It remains then to consider him, more particularly than we have hitherto done, in this most known and conspicuous part of his character; where his merit is unquestionably great and entirely his own: for to the writings of the antients he was not, he could not, be obliged. They had either mistaken the right road to natural knowlege: or if any of them struck into it by chance, finding the way difficult, obscure, and tedious, they soon abandoned it for ever. He owed to himself alone, to a certain intellectual sagacity, that beam of true discernment which shewed him at once, and as it were by intuition, what the most painful enquirers, for more than twenty ages backward, had searched after in vain. And here let me observe towards him the same impartiality I have hitherto aimed at; and, in order to know what he really did as a philosopher, place before the reader a short view of the state of learning in Europe, from the dark period of

Gothicism down to the sixteenth century. But let me at the same time acknowledge, that this account will be only a rude and imperfect sketch; consisting of a few detached particulars, without much order or method.

ALTHO the great aera of ignorance has been fixed justly enough, to those times when the northern nations, like a mighty inundation, overspread the face of Europe; yet it is no less certain that barbarism and corruption were entered into the arts and sciences ere the Savages had made any impression on the Roman empire. Under them indeed, that darkness which had been long growing on the world, and gradually extinguishing every light of knowledge, soon became total, and threatened to be perpetual. In the eighth century, we find that the highest ambition of the Clergy was to vie with one another in chanting the public service, which yet they hardly understood. This important emulation run so high between the Latin and French priesthood, that Charlemagne, who was then at Rome, found it necessary to interpose, and decide the controversy in person\*. The Monk, who relates this affair with a most circumstantial exactness, adds that the Emperor entreated Pope Adrian to procure

\* 787. Joannis Launoi. op. t. 4. p. 2.

him certain persons, who might teach his subjects the first principles of grammar and arithmetic; arts that were then utterly unknown in his dominions. This warlike Monarch, though his own education had been so far neglected that he had never learned to write, discovered, by his natural good sense, the value of knowledge, and set himself to be it's promoter and patron. He even allowed a public school to be opened in the imperial palace, under the direction of our famous countryman Alcuin; on whom he chiefly relied for introducing into France some tincture of that philosophy which was still remaining in Britain. But how slow and ineffectual the progress of any learning must have been, we may guess from an edict of the Council of Challons, in the next century\*; which earnestly exhorts all monasteries to be careful in having their manuals of devotion correctly transcribed†: lest, while they piously mean to ask of God one thing, some inaccurate manuscript may betray them into praying for the quite contrary.

As to Britain, if learning had still some footing there in the eighth century, it was so totally exterminated from thence in the ninth; that, throughout the whole kingdom of the West-

\* 913. † Launoii, p. 3.

Saxons, no man could be found who was scholar enough to instruct our King Alfred \*, then a child, even in the first elements of reading: so that he was in his twelfth year before he could name the letters of the alphabet. When that renowned Prince ascended the throne, he made it his study to draw his people out of the sloth and stupidity in which they lay: and became, as much by his own example, as by the encouragement he gave to learned men, the great restorer of arts in his dominions. And here we are called upon to observe, that as France had been formerly obliged to England in the person of Alcuin, who planted the sciences there under Charlemagne †: our Island now received the same friendly assistance from thence by Grimbold, whom King Alfred had invited hither, and made Chancellor of Oxford. Such events as these are too considerable, in the literary history of the ninth age, to be passed over unobserved. The rise of a noted grammarian, the voyage of an applauded doctor, are recorded, by the chroniclers of that century, with the same reverence that an antient writer would mention the appearance of a Lycurgus, or a Timeleon; of a law-giver who new-models a

\* Hist. & antiq. univer. Oxon, p. 13. † 879.

state, or a hero who rescues a whole people from slavery.

BUT these fair appearances were of short duration. A night of thicker darkness quickly overspread the intellectual world: and in the moral, followed a revolution still more deplorable. To common sense and piety, succeeded dreams and fables, visionary legends and ridiculous penances. The Clergy, now utter strangers to all good learning, instead of guiding a rude and vicious Laity by the precepts of the gospel which they no longer read; amused them with forged miracles, or over-awed them by the ghostly terrors of demons, spectres and chimeras. This was more easy, and more profitable too, than the painful example of a virtuous life. The profound depravity that was spread through all conditions of men, ecclesiastic and secular, appears in nothing more plain than in the reasons assigned for calling several councils about this time. In one, new canons were to be made, forbidding adultery, incest, and the practice of Pagan superstitions: as if these things had not till then been accounted criminal \*. In another, it was found necessary to declare, that a number of Angels, worshipped universally under certain names, were altogether unknown: and that

\* Giannone, *Istor. di Napoli*, l. 3.



the church could not warrant the particular invocation of more than three. Another, which the Empress Irene had summoned for the reformation of discipline, ordained, that no Prelate should thenceforth convert his episcopal palace into a common inn: nor, in consideration only of any sum of money given him by one man, curse and excommunicate another. A fourth and fifth censure the indecency of avowed concubinage: and enjoin that Fryars and Nuns should no longer converse or live promiscuously in the same convent.

THE See of Rome, which should have been a pattern to the rest, was of all christian churches the most licentious \*; and the pontifical chair often

\* The book entitled, *The tax of the Roman Chancery*, published first at Rome, in the year 1514, furnishes us with a flagrant instance of this in the following passage, which I chuse not to translate. " *Absolutio a lapsu carnis super quocunque actu libidinoso commissio per Clericum, etiam cum monialibus, intra et extra septa monasterii; aut cum consanguineis vel affinibus, aut filia spiritali, aut quibusdam aliis, sive ab unoquoque de per se, sive simul ab omnibus absolutio petatur cum dispensatione ad ordines et beneficia, cum inhibitione, tur. 36, duc. 3. Si vero cum illis petatur absolutio etiam a crimine commissio contra naturam, vel cum brutis, cum dispensatione, ut supra, et cum inhibitione, tur. 90, duc. 12, car. 16. Si vero petatur tantum absolutio a crimine contra naturam, vel cum brutis, cum dispensatione et inhibitione, turon. 36. duc. 9.*" *Absolutio pro Moniali que se permittit pluries cognosci intra et extra septa monasterii, cum rehabilitate*

filled with men, who, instead of adorning their sacred character, made human nature itself detestable: a truth by many catholic writers acknowledged and lamented. Several Popes were by their successors excommunicated, their acts abrogated, and the sacraments administered by them pronounced invalid †. No less than six were expelled by others who usurped their seat; two were assassinated: and the infamous Theodora, infamous even in that age, by her credit in the holy city obtained the triple crown for the most avowed of her gallants; who assumed the name of John the Tenth. Another ‡ of the same name was called to govern the Christian world at the age of twenty one; a bastard son of Pope Sergius, who died eighteen years before. If such were the men who arrogated to themselves titles and attributes peculiar to the Diety, can we wonder at the greatest enormities among Lay-men? Their stupidity kept pace with the dissolution of their manners, which was extreme: they still preserved, for the very clergy we have been speaking of, a reverence they no longer had for their

“ ad dignitates illius ordinis, etiam abbatialem, turon. 36,  
 “ duc. 9.” In the Edition of Bois-le-duc, there is “ Ab-  
 “ solutio pro eo, qui interfecit patrem, matrem, fororem,  
 “ uxorem . . . g. 3, vel 7.” Vide Bayle, art. Banck.

† Idem, l. 7.

‡ John XI.

God. The most abandoned among them, miscreants, familiar with crimes that humanity startles at, would yet, at the hazard of their lives, defend the immunities of a church, a consecrated utensil, or a donation made to a convent. In such times as those, it were in vain to look for useful learning and philosophy. Not only the light of science, but of reason, seems to have been well-nigh extinguished.

It was not till late \*, after the sack of Constantinople by the Turks, that the writings of Aristotle began to be universally known and studied. They were then, by certain fugitive Greeks, who had escaped the fury of the Ottoman Arms, brought away and dispersed through the Western parts of Europe. Some particular treatises of his, it is true, had been long made public: but chiefly in translations from the Arabic, done by men who, far from rendering faithfully the Author's sense, hardly understood his language. These however gave birth to the Scholastic Philosophy; that motley offspring of error and ingenuity: and to speak freely, the features of both parents were all along equally blended in the complexion of the daughter. To trace at length the rise, progress, and variations of this philosophy, would

\* An 1453.

be an undertaking not only curious but instructive; as it would unfold to us all the mazes in which the force, the subtlety, the extravagance of human wit can lose themselves; till not only profane learning but divinity itself was at last, by the refined frenzy of those who taught both, subtilized into mere notion and air.

THEIR philosophy was neither that of Aristotle entirely, nor altogether differing from his. Whatever opinions the first founders of it had been able to draw, from Boetius his Latin commentator, or from the wretched translations above mentioned, these they methodized and illustrated, each according to his several talent, and the genius of the age he lived in. But this, instead of producing one regular and consistent body of science, even from wrong principles, ended in a monster, made up of parts every where misshapen and dissimilar. Add to this, that they left natural knowledge wholly uncultivated; to hunt after occult qualities, abstract notions, and questions of impertinent curiosity: by which they rendered the very Logic, their labours chiefly turned upon, intricate, useless, unintelligible.

ALSTEDIUS, in his chronology of the Schoolmen, has divided their history into three principal periods or successions: the first beginning

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with Lanfranc \*, Archbishop of Canterbury, who flourished about the middle of the eleventh century ; and ending with Albert the Great two ages later † : the second, that commences from him, determining in Durand ; as the third and last ended in Luther, at the reformation. Morhoff ‡, however, strenuously contends, that Rucelinus, an Englishman, was properly the father of the Schoolmen : and that to him the sect of the Nominalists owed it's rise and credit. He adds, that it revived afterwards in the person of Occam, another of our countrymen, and the perpetual antagonist of Duns Scotus, who had declared for the Realists, and was reckoned their ablest champion. The learned reader needs not be told, that the Scholastic Doctors were all distinguished into these two Sects ; formidable party names, which are now as little known or mentioned as the controversies that once occasioned them. It is sufficient to say, that, like all other parties, they hated each other heartily ; treated each other as heretics in logic : and that their disputes were often sharp and bloody ; ending not only in the metaphorical destruction of common sense and language, but in the real mutilation and death of

\* An. 1050.

† An. 1320.

‡ Polyhistor. Tom. II. p. 73, &c.



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the combitants. For, to the disgrace of human reason, mankind in all their controversies, whether about a notion or a thing, a predicament or a province, have made their last appeal to brute force and violence. The titles \* with which these Leaders were honored by their followers, on account of the sublime reveries they taught, are at once magnificent and absurd: and prove rather the superlative ignorance of those times than any transcendent merit in the men to whom they were applied. From this censure we ought nevertheless to except One, who was a prodigy of knowledge for the age he lived in, and is acknowledged as such by the age to which I am writing. I mean the renowned Fryar Bacon, who shone forth singly through the profound darkness of those times; but rather dazzled than enlightened the weaker eyes of his cotemporaries. As if the name of Bacon were auspicious to philosophy, this Man, not only without assistance or encouragement, but insulted and persecuted, by the unconquerable force of his genius penetrated far into the mysteries of nature: and made so many new discoveries in Astronomy and Perspective, in

\* The profound, the subtle, the marvelous, the indefatigable, the irrefragable, the angelic, the seraphic, the fountain of life, light of the world, &c.

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Mechanics and Chimiftry, that the moft sober writers even now cannot mention them without fome marks of emotion and wonder. It is Dr. Freind's obfervation, that he was almoft the only Aftronomer of his age: and the reformation of the Callendar, by him attempted and in a manner perfected, is a noble proof of his fkill in that fci-ence. The construction of fpectacles, of telefcopes, and all forts of glaffes that magnify or diminifh objects, the compofition of gunpowder (which Bartholdus Swartz is thought to have firft hit upon almoft a century later) are fome of the many inventions with juftice afcribed to him. For all which, he was in his life-time calumniated and oppreffed: and after his death wounded in his good name, as a magician who had dealt in arts, infernal and abominable. He tells us, that there weré but four perfons then in Europe who had made any progrefs in the Mathematics; and in Chimi-ftry yet fewer: that thofe, who undertook to tran-flate Aristotle, were every way unequal for the task; and that his writings, which, rightly underftood, Bacon confidered as the fountain of all knowlege, had been lately condemned and burn-  
ed, in a fynod held at Paris.

THE works of that celebrated Antient have, in truth, more exercifed the hatred and admirati-

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on of mankind, than those of all the other philosophers together. Launoy \* enumerates no less than thirty seven Fathers of the Church who have stigmatized his name, and endeavoured to reprobate his doctrines. Morhoff † has reckoned up a still greater number of his commentators, who were at the same time implicitly his disciples: and yet both these authors are far from having given a complete list either of his friends or enemies. In his life-time he was suspected of irreligion, and, by the Pagan priesthood, marked out for destruction: the successors of these very men were his partizans and admirers. His works met with much the same treatment from the Christian Clergy: sometimes proscribed for heretical; sometimes triumphant, and acknowledged the great bulwark of Orthodoxy. Launoy has written a particular treatise on the subject, and mentioned eight different revolutions in the fortune and reputation of Aristotle's philosophy. To pass over the intermediate changes, I will just mention two, that make a full and ridiculous contrast. In the above-mentioned Council held at Paris about the year 1209 ‡, the Bishops there censured his writings, without discrimination, as

\* Lib. de varia Arist. fortuna, Tom. IV.

† Polyhistor, Tom. II,

‡ Launoïus, ubi supra.

the pestilent sources of error and heresy; condemned them to the flames, and commanded all persons, on pain of excommunication, not to read, transcribe, or keep any copies of them. They went farther, and delivered over to the secular arm no less than ten persons; who were buried alive, for certain tenets, drawn, as those learned prelates had heard, from the pernicious books in question. Those very books, in the sixteenth century, were not only read with impunity, but every where taught with applause: and whoever disputed their orthodoxy, I had almost said their infallibility, was persecuted as an infidel and miscreant. Of this the sophister Ramus is a memorable instance. Certain animadversions of his, on the peripatetic philosophy, occasioned a general commotion in the learned world. The university of Paris took the alarm hotly, and cried out against this attempt as destructive of all good learning, and of fatal tendency to religion itself. The affair was brought before the parliament: and appeared of so much consequence to Francis the First \*, that he would needs take it under his own immediate cognizance. The edict is still extant, which declares Ramus insolent, impudent, and a liar. His books are thereby for ever con-

\* Launoi, Tom. IV. p. 206.

demned and abolished \*: and, what is a strain of unexampled severity, the miserable Author is solemnly interdicted from transcribing, even from reading, his own compositions !

WE might from hence be led to imagine, that when the authority of an antient philosopher was held so sacred, philosophy itself must have been thoroughly understood, and cultivated with uncommon success. But the attachment of those Doctors was to a name, not to truth, or valuable science: and our Author very justly compares them to the Olympic Wrestlers, who abstained from necessary labors, that they might be fit for such as were not so †. Under their management, it was a philosophy of words and notions, that seemed to exclude the study of nature; that instead of enquiring into the properties of bodies, into the laws of motion by which all effects are produced, was conversant only in logical definitions, distinctions, and abstractions, utterly barren and unproductive of any advantage to mankind. The great aim of these solemn triflers was rather to perplex a dispute than to clear up any point of useful disquisition; to triumph over an enemy, than to enlarge the knowlege, or better the morals of their followers. So that this cap-

\* May, 10th, An. 1543.

† Bacon's Apothegms.



tious philosophy was a real obstacle to all advances in sound learning, human and divine. After it had been adopted into the christian theology, far from being of use to explain and ascertain mysteries, it served only to darken and render doubtful the most necessary truths; by the chicanery of argumentation with which it supplied each sect, in defence of their peculiar and favorite illusions. To so extravagant a height did they carry their idolatry of Aristotle, that some of them discovered, in his writings, the doctrine of the Trinity; that others published formal dissertations to prove the certainty of his salvation, though a heathen: and that a patriarch of Venice is said to have called up the Devil expressly, in order to learn from him the meaning of a hard word in Aristotle's physics \*. But the crafty Demon, who perhaps did not understand it himself, answered in a voice so low and inarticulate, that the good prelate knew not a word he said. This was the famous Hermolaus Barbaro. The Greek word, that occasioned his taking so extraordinary a step, is the *Entelechia* of the peripatetics, from whence the schoolmen raised their substantial forms: and which Leibnitz, towards the end of the last century, attempted to revive in his Theory of motion.

\* Bayle, art. Barbaro.

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THE Reformation itself, that diffused a new light over Europe, that set men upon enquiring into errors and prepossessions of every kind, served only to confirm the dominion of this philosophy: protestants as well as papists entrenching themselves behind the authority of Aristotle, and defending their several tenets by the weapons with which he furnished them. This unnatural alliance, of theology with the peripatetic doctrines, rendered his opinions not only venerable but sacred: they were reckoned as the land-marks of faith and reason both, which to pull up or remove, would be daring and impious. Innovations in philosophy, it was imagined, would gradually sap the very foundations of religion, and in the end lead to downright atheism. If that veil of awful obscurity, which then covered the face of nature, should be once drawn; the rash curiosity of mankind would lead them to account for all appearances in the visible world, by second causes, by the powers of matter and mechanism: and thus they might come insensibly to forget or neglect the great original cause of all. This kind of reasoning convinced the multitude, over-awed the wiser few, and effectually put a stop to the progress of useful knowledge.

SUCH, in general, were the dispositions of mankind when Sir Francis Bacon came into the world: whom we will not consider as the founder of a new sect, but as the great assertor of human liberty against them all; as one who rescued reason and truth from the slavery in which they had been held till then by each sect alike. A plausible hypothesis, a shining theory, are more amusing to the imagination, and a shorter way to fame, than the patient and humble method of experimenting, of pursuing nature through all her labyrinths by fact and observation; no wonder, therefore, that a philosophy, built on this principle, could not, at first, make any sudden or general revolution in the learned world. But it's progress, like that of time, quiet, slow and sure, has in the end been mighty and universal. He was not however the first among the moderns who ventured to dissent from Aristotle. Ramus, Patricius, Bruno, Severinus, to name no more, had already attacked the authority of that tyrant in learning, who had long reigned as absolutely over the opinions, as his restless pupil had of old affected to do over the persons of men. But these writers invented little that was valuable themselves, however justly they might reprehend many things in him. And as to the real improvements made

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in some parts of natural knowlege, before our Author appeared, by Gilbert, Harvey, Copernicus, Father Paul, and some few others, they are well known, and have been deservedly celebrated. Yet there was still wanting one great and comprehensive plan, that might embrace the almost infinite varieties of science, and guide our enquiries aright in all. This Sir Francis Bacon at first conceived, in it's utmost extent; to his own lasting honor, and to the general utility of mankind. If we stand surprized at the happy imagination of such a system, our surprize redoubles upon us when we reflect, that he invented and methodized this system, perfected so much, and sketched out so much more of it, amidst the drudgery of business and the civil tumults of a court. Nature seems to have intended him peculiarly for this province, by bestowing on him with a liberal hand all the qualities requisite; a fancy voluble and prompt to discover the similitudes of things; a judgment steady and intent to note their subtlest differences, a love of meditation and enquiry; a patience in doubting; a slowness and diffidence in affirming; a facility of retracting; a judicious anxiety to plan and dispose. A mind of such a cast, that neither affected novelty, nor idolized antiquity, that was an enemy to all imposture, must have

had a certain congeniality and natural relation to truth \*. These characters, which, with a noble confidence, he has applied to himself, are obvious and eminent in his Instauration of the Sciences: a work by him designed, not as a monument to his own fame, but a perpetual legacy for the common benefit of others. He has divided the whole of it into six capital parts: with a short account of which we shall close this imperfect relation of his life and writings.

I. THE first part of this Instauration proposes a general survey of human knowlege: and this he executed in that admirable treatise entitled, The Advancement of Learning \*. As he intended to raise a new and lasting structure of philosophy, founded not in arbitrary opinions or specious conjectures, but in truth and experience; it was absolutely necessary to his design, first to review accurately the state of learning as it then stood, through all its provinces and divisions. To do this effectually required, with an uncommon measure of knowlege, a discernment not only exquisite but universal: the whole intellectual world was subjected to it's examination and censure. That he might not lose himself on a subject so vast and of such variety; he has, ac-

\* De augmentis scientiarum.



according to the three faculties of the soul, memory, fancy, understanding, ranged the numerous train of arts under three great classes, history, poetry, philosophy. These may be considered as the principal trunks from which shoot forth, in prodigious diversity, the lesser parts and branches of science. Whatever is deficient, erroneous, or still wanting in each, he has pointed out at large; together with the properest means for amending the defects, for rectifying the errors, and for supplying the omissions in all. Upon the whole, he was not only well acquainted with every thing that had been discovered in books before his time, and able to pronounce critically on those discoveries: he saw still farther, and at the end of this treatise has marked out, in one general chart, the several tracts of science that lay still neglected or unknown. And to say truth, some of the most valuable improvements since made have grown out of the hints and notices scattered through this work: from which the moderns have selected, each according to his fancy, one or more plants to cultivate and bring to perfection.

2. THE design of the *Novum Organon* \*, which stands as the second part to his *Instauration*,

\* *Novum Organon*.

and may be reckoned the most considerable, was to raise and enlarge the powers of the mind, by a more useful application of it's reasoning faculty to all the different objects that philosophy considers. In this place, our Author offers to the world a new and better Logic; calculated not to supply arguments for controversy, but arts for the use of mankind: not to triumph over an enemy by the sophistry of disputation, but to subdue nature itself by experiment and enquiry. As it differs from the vulgar Logic in it's aim, it varies no less from that captious art in the form of demonstrating: for it generally rejects syllogism, as an instrument rather hurtful than serviceable, to the investigation of nature, and uses in it's stead a severe and genuine induction. Not the trivial method of the schools, that, proceeding on a simple and superficial enumeration, pronounces at once from a few particulars, exposed to the danger of contradictory instances: but an induction that examines scrupulously the experiment in question, views it in all possible lights, rejects and excludes whatever does not necessarily belong to the subject; then, and not till then, concluding from the affirmatives left. A croud of instances might be brought to shew how greatly

this method of enquiry has prospered in the hands of the moderns; how fruitful it has been of new discoveries, unknown and unimagined by antiquity. But I will only mention one that may stand in place of many; the Optics of our immortal Newton: where, in a variety of experiments, he has analyzed the nature and properties of light itself, the most subtile of all bodies, with an accuracy, a precision, that could hardly have been expected from examining the grossest and most palpable. From whence, by the method of induction, he has raised the noblest theory that any age or country can shew.

3. IT has been the fate of almost every considerable scheme for the good of mankind to be treated, at first, as visionary, or impracticable, merely for being new. This our Author foresaw, and attempted to obviate, in the third part of his *Instauration* \*; by furnishing materials himself towards a natural and experimental history: a work which he thought so indispensibly necessary, that without it the united endeavours of all mankind, in all ages, would be insufficient to rear and perfect the structure of the sciences. He was aware too, that even men of freer and more ex-

\* *Phaenomena universi.*

tensive notions, who relished his new Logic, might be deterred from reducing it to practice, by the difficulties they would meet with in experimenting, according to the rules by him prescribed. He therefor led the way to other enquirers, in his *Sylva Sylvarum*, or history of nature: which, however imperfect in many respects, ought to be looked upon as extensive and valuable for that age, when the whole work was to be begun. This collection, which did not appear till after his death, has been generally considered as detached from, and independent on his general plan: and therefor his design, in making and recording these experiments, has not been duly attended to by the reader. They are a common repository or store-house of materials, not arranged for ornament and show, but thrown loosely together for the service of the philosopher: who may from thence select such as fit his present purpose; and with them, by the aid of that Organ or Engine already described, build up some part of axiomatical philosophy, which is the crown and completion of this system. The phenomena of the universe he ranges under three principal divisions;\*; the history of generations; or the pro-

*and natural history of plants, animals, and minerals.*  
\* Bacon; Vol. II. p. 3. It is divided between

duction of all species according to the common laws of nature; that of preter generations, or of births deviating from the stated rule; and, thirdly, the history of nature, as confined or assisted, changed or tortured by the art of man: which last discloses to us a new face of things, and as it were another world of appearances. The use of such a history he reckons two-fold: either the knowlege of qualities in themselves: or to serve for the first matter of a true and useful philosophy. With this view only did our Author make and gather together the miscellaneous collection I am speaking of. That many particular experiments have been doubtful or false, cannot be wondered at: the whole was then a tract of science uncultivated and desert. If several considerable men, treading in the path he struck out for them, have gone farther and surveyed it more exactly than he did, yet to him is the honor of their discoveries in a manner due. It was Columbus alone who imagined there might be a new world: and who had the noble boldness to go in search of it, through an ocean unexplored and immense. He succeeded in the attempt; and led his followers into a spacious continent, rich and fruitful. If succeeding adventurers have penetrated farther than he into it's several regions,



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marked out and distinguished them with more accuracy; the result of these discoveries has less extended their fame than it has raised and enlarged his.

4. AFTER these preparations, nothing seems wanting but to enter at once on the last and most exalted kind of philosophy\*: but the Author judged, that, in an affair so complicated and important, some other things ought to precede, partly for instruction, and partly for present use. He therefor interposed a fourth and fifth part: the former of which he named *Scala Intellectus*, or a series of steps by which the understanding might regularly ascend in it's philosophical researches. For this purpose, he proposed examples of enquiry and investigation, agreeable to his own method, in certain subjects; selecting such especially as are of the most noble order, and most widely differing from one another; that instances of every sort might not be wanting. The fourth part then was to contain a particular application and illustration of the second. In this light we chuse to consider the six monthly histories which he proposed to write on six principal topics in natural knowledge: namely, of winds;

\* *Scala Intellectus*.

of life and death; of rarefaction and condensation; of the three chymical principles, salt, sulphur, mercury; of bodies heavy and light; of sympathy and antipathy. The first three, in the order I have here placed them, he prosecuted at some length; and in a manner, that shews with what a happy sagacity he could apply his own rules to the interpretation of nature. The wonder is, that other enquirers, since his time, have done so little towards perfecting the two first mentioned, things of so great concern to human society, and to every individual. As to the three last, we have only a short introduction to each: death having prevented him from writing any thing on the subjects themselves. Such is our condition here: whoever is capable of planning useful and extensive schemes dies always too soon for mankind, even in the most advanced age.

5. OF the fifth part he has left nothing but the title and scheme\*. It was indeed to be only a temporary structure, raised with such materials as he himself had either discovered, or tryed, or improved; not according to the due form of genuine induction, but by the same common use

\* Anticipationes Philos. secundæ.

of the understanding that others had employed. And this was to remain no longer than till he had raised,

6. THE sixth and sublimest part of this grand Instauration, to which all the preceding are merely subservient †: a philosophy purely axiomatical and scientific; flowing from that just, castigated, genuine manner of enquiry, which the author first invented and applied. But this he despaired of being able to accomplish: and the Learned of all countries from his days have been only labouring on some separate or lesser parts of this infinite edifice; which, though impossible for mankind ever to complete, will for ever deserve their united attention and endeavours to enlarge and improve it.

SUCH, and so unlimited were his views for the universal advancement of science; the noble aim to which he directed all his philosophic labours. What Cæsar said, in complement to Tully, may, with strict justice, be applied to him: that it was more glorious to have extended the limits of human wit, than to have enlarged the bounds of the Roman world. Sir Francis Bacon really did so: a truth acknowledged not only by the greatest

\* Philosophia prima, five activa.

private names in Europe, but by all the public societies of it's most civilized nations. France, Italy, Germany, Britain, I may add even Russia, have taken him for their leader, and submitted to be governed by his institutions. The empire he has erected in the learned world is as universal as the free use of reason: and One must continue, till the Other is no more.

# THE END.

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W R I T I N G S,

As they are printed in the Edition of 1740.



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My Lord Bacon

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